THE PRESENT AGE.

$2.00 PER YEAR. "MASTER MIND, AND YOU MASTER THE UNIVERSE." "COME, NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER." IN ADVANCE.

VOL. II. KALAMAZOO, MICH., SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 1869. No. 2.

Original Poetry.

LIFE BLOSSOMS.

INSPIRED BY LYMAN C. HOWE.

Every blossom hath its promise
Tho' it wither on life's tree,
It hath wrought its purpose early,
For the fruit that is to be.

If the apple be not moulded
As our fancy may desire,
We may trust the fragrant promise
Of its life, in something higher.

How we grovel after phantoms
In the forms that hide the goal,
Never dreaming of the blossoms,
That have only fruit of soul.

O! the sweetness they have given
To the bitter world of frowns,
Hath a language, only spoken,
When we see the soul of sounds.

The bright blossoms that have perished
Without products for the land,
Have a mission of the spirit,
And a might that must command.

Ther's nothing lost in dying,
When the products of the years,
Are preserved in the translation,
And repeated in the spheres.

Literary.

[Copyright secured by law.]

ADRIFT;

OR

CLOUDS WITH SILVER LININGS.

A Tale of Life's Vicissitudes

BY J. WILLIAM VAN NAMEE.

Author of "Ripples on the Tide of Life," "Destiny," "Faithless Guardian," "Saved," "Child of the Wreck," "Deep Waters," "Angel Friends," "Passion and Reality," "Guardian Angels," "Driftwood," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IV.

"There is a sweetness in a tear
Which springs from genuine sympathy,
That nought this side the grave can give
In such transcendent purity."

"Let us gather up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path;
Let us keep the wheat and roses,
Casting out the thorns and chaff;
Let us find our sweetest comfort
In the blessings of to-day,
With a patient hand removing
All the briers from our way."

The duties of the day were all accomplished, and Marion sat in her room thinking; it was a strange habit she had, sitting for hours thinking and dreaming, wondering in memory's still chambers, and gazing upon the pictures of the past adorning the walls, or, taking up the circumstances of the present, trying to weave them into something like a prophetic view of the sealed future. At such times, she loved to think that her mother was near her, and with spirit eyes read the tracings on the leaves of her heart's book, and threw around her a strengthening influence to enable her better to bear the crosses of life, and endure the burdens laid upon her patient shoulders.

This afternoon she was living over the events of the day, carefully revolving each trivial incident in her own mind, and studying where and how she might have done better than she did; and as the glad sunshine stole through the window, and crept stealthily over the carpet and kissed her feet, tears fell upon her folded hands; the thoughtless words uttered by Maggie Wilbur had sunken deep into her heart, and wounded her acutely sensitive feelings, and she mused thus:

"Why should I care for those thoughtless words? no doubt, the careless girl meant nothing by them, and why does the thought that she is in some way connected with my destiny force itself upon me? Alas, I cannot answer; would that I could; but her evident desire to turn my friendly overtures to ridicule, almost made me cry with pain. I am too sensitive, too easily wounded in feeling, to occupy the position of instructor, and yet what else can I do? God help me to do my duty, and oh, my angel mother, watch over and guide your faltering child aright; let me feel that your spirit is near me, and I can better bear my trials—struggle on with faith and hope, and realize that after all the storms of life, there will come a peaceful calm, and quiet rest, that will more than recompense the weary heart for all its struggles, agonies, and burdens."

A loud knock was heard at the door, and rising from her seat, and wiping the tears from her eyes, she opened the door, and before her stood Maggie Wilbur.

"May I come in?" asked Maggie, in a childish, pleading way.

"Certainly, I am glad to see you—shall always be glad to see any of the young ladies who may be pleased to visit me, sit down." as she spoke, she resumed her own seat—the arm chair—Maggie seated herself upon an ottoman at her feet, and looking up into her face, with tears in her blue eyes, said—

"Will you forgive me for my rudeness in the recitation room, this morning? I did not mean to be impudent, truly I did not."

"I know you did not, Miss Wilbur, and—"

"Please call me Maggie, then I'll think you like me."

"Well, Maggie, I know you did not, but your words hurt my feelings; it was foolish in me to allow them to do so, but I could not help it. I was thinking of you when you knocked at my door; when we first met this morning I was strongly attracted towards you. I can never account for these peculiar feelings of attraction or repulsion I feel for people of whom I know nothing, but I was attracted towards you most forcibly, and I determined to win your affections, and after the little incident in the recitation room, I feared you had taken a dislike to me, and chosen that way of manifesting it, and it made me feel very unhappy."

And I have been unhappy, too; I am a wild, thoughtless girl, and am always doing some thing wrong; and the last teacher we had, was such a cross old thing, that I did every thing I could to plague her, and I have got so in the habit of saying saucy things, that I did not think a moment before I spoke this morning, but your gentle reproof made me feel very unhappy, and I have done nothing but cry about it ever since school was out; I never was a bit sorry for anything I have said before; and so I determined to come and ask you to forgive me, and forget that I ever said any thing unkind to you—and you will, wont you?"

Marion bent down and kissed the rosy cheek of Maggie, and taking both her hands between her own, she said—

"We will forget it; let neither of us ever speak of it again; we are friends now, Maggie Wilbur, may we ever remain so; I am alone in the world; Mrs. Hanford and you are the only friends I have."

"Oh, no, we're not; all the girls are your friends; every one of them likes you, even Eveleen Gray, who is so proud and haughty, said you were just like an angel, and they are all trying to please you and make you love them."

"Which will be no difficult task, I am inclined to think, and yet I shall always look to you, Maggie, for a deeper friendship, a holier love, than they can give. I cannot fathom the reason of this indescribable attraction towards you, but we will accept it, and let the future solve the mystery; you and I are very unlike, and I am doubtless much older than you."

"I am sixteen—but I don't feel so old," said Maggie, with all the artless impetuosity, and frankness of her nature.

"Sixteen," repeated Marion, "you do not look so old, Maggie, and I am three years your senior, and I look even older than I am."

"Yes, but you have known trouble, and I have not, my life has been all sunshine, and I don't believe I'd feel it much if I did have trouble, for brother Paul says my heart is made of India rubber, and sorrows, when they reach it, re-bound and leave it perfectly unharmed; but I don't believe he knows all about me."

"You are to be envied, Maggie, very few have reached your age without knowing something of sorrow."

Maggie seemed to be plunged in deep thought for a moment, and then started up, and exclaimed, as if she had really some gratification in being able to inform her new friend that she had seen something of sorrow—

"I forgot when I said I had never known any kind of sorrow; I did once feel as if my heart would break. It was when poor little Fannie died; she looked at me so sorrowful, I shall never forget it."

"And who was little Fannie? a younger sister?"

"Oh, no, it was my poor little kitten."

Marion could not restrain a smile at this reply—indeed, it was with difficulty she freed herself from breaking into a hearty laugh, for the solemn expression of Maggie's face would certainly indicate the most serious of heart trouble.

"You are a dear girl, Maggie; judging from the expression of your face, and the intonation of your voice, as well as the words used, I should have supposed you were speaking of your best friend."

"And so I was; no one but Fannie loved me, Paul and his stuck-up cottage friends always called me Mag Wildfire, and papa said I was like an unbroken colt; and I don't believe either of them loved me one half as much as Fannie did."

"And did your mother not love you?"

"My mother died when I was only a baby; I never saw her to my knowledge, and that is why I am so rude and wild, I suppose, but you will teach me better, wont you? Mrs Hanford, says she has more trouble with me than with all the other girls put together, but I cant help it; I was born so, and I can't make my nature different; God intended me to be a wild, crazy, good-for-nothing, and I am only fulfilling my destiny."

Marion smiled at the careless freedom of her companion's remarks, and then replied—

"No, Maggie, God never intended you to be a wild, crazy good-for-nothing. We are all created to fulfill some mission, to perform some work, to do something that no other person can do for us; your life work may not have been made plain to you yet, for circumstances which surround us often prevent us from seeing as we should see, prevent us from fathoming the seeming mysteries of life, which when solved are so plain that we wonder at our former blindness, and want of penetration. It seemed a misfortune that you lost your mother, many would look upon it as such, and yet it was right, it was necessary for the proper unfolding of your life, or it never would have occurred. There is a higher and a wiser power governing our lives and holding our destinies, and when we learn to rely upon the wisdom of that power, we find ourselves happier, and truer to our own natures. I hope you will look upon me in the light of an older sister, and confide in me, and to the best of my ability, I will advise you, and, with assistance from the source of all good, prove to you a friend."

Maggie flung her arms around Marion's neck, and from that hour the two were forever dear to each other. Had a clairvoyant medium been present—a description, and elucidation of the peculiar influences felt by Marion, would have been given, but she was contented to know that a calm, quiet happiness had settled over her spirit, and the future promised much of joy to her.

The consoling and comforting influences of sympathy and love were around her, and life's withered blossoms were reviving, and sending forth a fragrance rich and subtle, that pervaded her whole being, and banished the gloom of past sorrows, and enabled her to realize the effulgent light of hope's ever beaming star, and her heart, in holy aspirations thanked the divine spirit of infinite goodness for thus leading her weary feet into pleasant paths, and casting her "lines in pleasant places."

CHAPTER V.

"How sweetly and gaily
The fleet moments glide,
When warmed by the sunshine
Of faces we love;
As the bright orb of day,
When he shines on the tide,
Makes its waves more swiftly
And brilliantly move;
For a smile of affection
Can lighten the heart,
As the sun to the stream
Can a splendor impart."

"Each gentle word is a bird of love,
That wings its way through the sky above,
To sing a song on the golden strand,
To give thee joy in the summer land.
Each gentle word is a music tide,
That passes on to the other side,
To chant a lay on the golden strand,
To give thee joy in the summer land.
All gentle words are the silver bells,
That echo forth from the heart's deep wells,
To ring a chime on the golden strand,
To give thee joy in the summer land."

After the afternoon of which we have written—the afternoon of Marion's first day's experience as a teacher in a boarding school, Maggie Wilbur was a different girl; she was none the less impetuous and frank, but she considered the feelings of others more; she was less boisterous, and paid more attention to her studies. Marion was pleased to mark this change; and so was Mrs. Hanford, for it gave promise of something still more earnest in the future. The fun-loving spirit, however, could never be subdued in Maggie Wilbur; it could be regulated, brought under certain subjection, within prescribed limits of propriety; but it was as natural to her to seek to turn even the most serious matters into amusement and ridicule, as it was to draw the breath that animated her being.

The young ladies all learned to love their gentle teacher, and in a thousand ways convinced her that they sympathized with her, and delighted to make her duties less arduous.

Of Maggie Wilbur's appearance we have said but little, and as she will figure conspicuously in our story, a description of her will not be out of place in this chapter. She was tall, well-formed, and would have been dignified in appearance, had it not been for her almost childish playfulness of manner; her eyes were dark blue, and when angry, they appeared to be almost of midnight blackness; her hair was of that peculiar purple black shade, sometimes met with among Southern and Spanish women, and hung in tangled ringlets over her shoulders; her lips were full, and red as ripe cherries; her skin was dark but clear, a beautiful olive; and altogether Maggie Wilbur was beautiful; but if conscious of the fact, paid but little attention to it, being free from anything like vanity. Her mother had died when she was a child, as the reader has already been informed through her conversation with Marion; her father, a wealthy Southern gentleman, had allowed her to run almost wild over his extensive plantation; her playmates being the children of her father's slaves. So reckless and disregardful of propriety and custom had she become, that her brother had bestowed upon her the name of "Mag Wildfire," and never wearied with arousing the uncontrolled anger which slumbered in her bosom, but which was so easily awakened, and then laughed at the shower of invectives heaped upon him, and the flashing fire of her brilliant eyes, as she would stand like a panther ready to spring upon him, or annihilate him with the fiery glances of her speaking eyes. Of course such a course was the height of imprudence, but Paul Wilbur did not realize this, and only thought of the amusement it afforded him while spending his vacations at the lonely and dull plantation home, for which he had little genuine attachment. Paul loved his sister, admired her beauty, and her independent, dashing, reckless manner, but she was so unlike the pampered children of fashion he met in the halls of wealth and refinement at the North, that he seemed to take infinite delight in heaping upon her all manner of ridicule, and making himself as unlovable and disagreeable to her during his short visits at home, as possible.

When Maggie reached her thirteenth year, her father had placed her under the charge of Mrs. Hanford, at Locust Grove, where she was to remain until her hitherto neglected education, should be completed, and only once had her father visited her during her stay of three years at Locust Grove, and she had never been permitted to visit her home, for her father feared if she was allowed to do so, she would resume her wild and untrained course, and he desired, if possible to transform the reckless girl into a self possessed, dignified young lady before she should return to her early home, desired that others should destroy the weeds he had allowed to grow unchecked in her life garden, and in their place sow the seeds of bright, beautiful blossoms, whose perfume might make her own life, and the lives of others better and happier. Oh, misguided parent, the task that should have been thy pleasure was left for strange hands to perform. Too many tender life buds are thus left to open neath the fostering care and culture of strangers—when those from whom they received their life should perform the labor, and find it indeed a "labor of love." Too many parents cast upon the shoulders of others, the responsibilities they alone should bear.

Maggie Wilbur had, during the three years of her residence at Locust Grove, enjoyed the reputation of being the most fearless and unruly pupil in the Seminary, and though an object of constant care and anxiety to Mrs. Hanford, she was a favorite with all, excepting Madame Ponti, the French teacher, who made no effort to conceal the dislike she felt for the impulsive, but noble hearted girl, and Maggie most thoroughly returned the dislike of the little French woman and though all others stood in awe of Madame Ponti, Maggie feared her not, and never lost an opportunity to annoy her, and though frequently reported to Mrs. Hanford for disorderly and unladylike conduct, she invariably managed to escape severe reprimand. Whenever any of the young ladies were entangled in difficulties—Maggie was ever ready to help them out—even though to do so she was compelled to disobey rules, or overstep the bounds of strict propriety, when she undertook a thing she was determined to carry it through, let the consequences be what they might, and certainly no one was more ready to make, even the most serious matters appear ridiculous, or find something to turn to ridicule in the most solemn exercises, and yet a more truly sympathetic and trust worthy heart never beat in human bosom than Maggie's. She was indeed a diamond in the rough, needing only the hand of the refiner and polisher to prove to the world the purity and brilliancy of the gem.

Madame Ponti was of noble birth, so *she said*, but had met with reverse of fortune, and by the force of circumstances, not inclination, had been compelled to resort to teaching, in order to supply the demands of physical existence. She was a small, disagreeable looking woman, of perhaps forty, though she most positively affirmed that she had not reached her thirty-second year; her eyes were small, keen and penetrating, of a dark gray color, and when fixed steadily upon you, made you feel very uncomfortable, and restless; her hair was sprinkled with threads of silver, and her skin was dark and wrinkled; no one liked her, and all, save Maggie, feared her; even Mrs. Hanford felt uneasy and strangely restless when alone with her, conscious that those small gray eyes were fixed upon her, and it seemed to be a source of especial gratification to the French woman that she was generally feared and disliked. Why Mrs. Hanford retained her in the Seminary no one could tell, and even Mrs. Hanford herself could not give a satisfactory reason for not discharging one who was so universally unpopular, and there was no just cause for such a step, for no one discharged their duties more faithfully or satisfactorily than Madame Ponti.

Marion Lee shared the general feeling of dislike and repugnance; those small gray eyes she thought, told a strange tale; and it had always been a singular truism with her, that she could read a person's character by looking into their eyes; at all events she read the character of the French woman correctly, when she made up her mind that she was unprincipled, avaricious, and one whose friendship or enmity were not to be desired, and though always polite when she met her, she avoided her in every possible manner.

Madame Ponti did not fail to notice this evident feeling of aversion and distrust, but she cautiously guarded her words and actions, and by no outward sign made her knowledge known, but on the contrary, sought every opportunity to thrust her society upon Marion, until the poor girl began to look upon her as her evil genius; and so susceptible was she to the French woman's presence, that she would tremble and quiver whenever Madame Ponti was approaching, even though her footstep gave back no echo, and she never entered her own room without locking the door behind her, lest the quiet, stealthily gliding form of the French woman should be unceremoniously thrust upon her consciousness, for Madame Ponti never allowed closed doors, unless they were securely fastened, to bar her entrance into any apartment she felt inclined to favor with her presence.

(To be continued.)

Written expressly for the Present Age.

FOUND.

BY GYPSIE.

"O where shall rest be found,—
Rest for the weary soul?
'T were vain the ocean's depths to sound,
Or pierce to either pole."

These were the words that greeted my ears, as I roamed through the woods near my home, sung in a clear tenor. I stopped, and peeping through the clematis vine, saw, stretched beneath a chestnut, my only brother. He was older by several years than I, still he was not a professor of religion, so I felt it was my duty to tell him where he might find abiding rest. Sitting beside him, I said:

"Dear brother, there is no other name given under heaven and among men, whereby we may be saved, but the name of Jesus. I wish you would seek in the right place for rest from your search after happiness."

"Little Gypsie," was his reply, "if I could believe your Jesus was the only savior—if I *could* feel that I was not to work out my *own* salvation"—

"Of course," I interrupted, "you are to do that—with fear and trembling, the Bible says."

But, Gyp, the Bible says "We are all the children of God, by *faith* in Christ Jesus;" in another place, "For by grace are ye saved through *faith*; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of *works*, lest any man should boast;" also, "But to him that *worketh* not, but *believeth* on him who justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted to him for righteousness."

"But, Willie, James says, "Show me thy faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

"Gypsie, James is but *one* of the writers of the Bible, but in his short book I can see many inconsistencies; for instance, if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to *all* men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in *faith*, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not *that* man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." And between the writings of James and Paul are still greater incongruities, for Paul says, "We conclude a man is justified by *faith without* the *deeds* of the law; but James, "By *works* a man is justified, and not by faith only. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Paul says, "To him that *worketh* is the reward, not reckoned of grace but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness;" and James says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? By works was faith made perfect." Paul everywhere tells of being justified by faith; James contends that "faith without works is dead."

"Oh Willie! I fear you have been reading the Scriptures for no good—only to pick them to pieces. You know we must neither add to nor take from the words of the book of God, lest God should add to us the plagues written therein, or lest He take our part out of the book of life."

"I know, my dear sister, nor have I done so; only I have looked upon its teachings in the light of reason; why, if he did not wish us to *reason* on these things, did he give us the faculty at all? And, Gypsie, how can I look at the inconsistencies in the Book, and not doubt its divine authenticity?"

"O Willie!" said I, for I had never thought much on the subject, having been taught to leave all my doubts and fears for God to take care of—"you will be as bad as Voltaire or Tom Paine."

"And how bad were they, little sister?"

"Why, they were infidels."

"What are infidels?"

"Unbelievers—Will, don't make fun of me!"

"Dear Gyp, that is impossible—but what is there so awful in unbelief?"

"Why, the unbeliever is to be cast into the pit that burneth with fire and brimstone."

"Where is that, dear?"

"It is *hell*."

"Puss, does not your Bible say the kingdom of heaven is within us? Why, then, should not hell be there, too?"

"O Willie! come away to Pa—he will tell you all about it. I am but a child in these things."

"As in all others, my dear. I have talked with our father on these subjects, and, darling, I think him very bigoted. Don't look so frightened! If God is the merciful being you tell about, cannot you leave me in His hands?"

"But, Willie, he is merciful to those only who comply with certain conditions, and in your present frame of mind"—

"Stop! Gypsie, and define 'mercy' for me."

"It is—why, Willie—it is kindness."

"Undeserved kindness, dear? Now, my sister, if I do all God commands me—in all things try to serve him—it is simply justice for him to give me love; but if I do not strive to obey him, then all are done in mercy. It is useless to tell me he is merciful, if you do not prove him so. Let these things rest for now. I do not feel quite ready to discuss this subject with you."

Willie and I were the oldest children of a clergyman, and from early childhood had been instructed in the *truths* of the scriptures. The conversation above narrated, led me to study the Bible more earnestly, from that time forth, that I might be able to speak more fully and decidedly to Willie at some future time. This earnest investigation, brought many questions to my mind, and led me to seek further instruction from my Father. One day I came to him with this question. "Pa, how can we be happy in Heaven, when we know some of our dearest earth friends are in eternal misery?" "My child our love is to be *perfected* there, we will love only the good, and pure, and true."

"Father, there is much good in every one!"

"True, my dear daughter."

"Why, then, should God cast them *eternally* from him? why not punish them, and then—as you do with us—receive them again into his favor?"

"Daughter, God knows what is best for our good—let us leave such things with him—our faith in him should be unquestioning."

"One more question, Father. Why are eternal, everlasting, and forever, as translated in the Bible, sometimes said to mean until the end of life, and at others, through all eternity?"

Father looked troubled, as he said. "My dear, I fear you cannot comprehend my entire meaning, still I will strive to make these things plain to you. The translators of the Bible had not as many words with which to express their meaning, as we now have, and some words at different times expressed different meanings."

"Thank you, sir!" I left him but I was not satisfied on a single point at which I had approached him. I thought perhaps my brain lacked some essential element, and wondered if women never had minds to understand theology; if God had hidden from them what he had revealed to wiser ones. Then I remembered Jesus said these things, while hidden from the wise and prudent, had been revealed unto babes, and I prayed: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me? Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? forever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"

CHAPTER II.

"O God! this land grows rich in loyal blood!
It is the costliest land beneath the sun!
"'Tis purchaseless!"

When the civil war broke out, my darling brother thought it his duty to enlist and serve his country in her hour of need. There is no necessity for me to tell you how we suffered at parting; many of you passed through similar trials, and can well remember the anguish, the doubts and fears—too often realized—that the loved ones would never again return to their homes. Midst the tears of all, our Willie left us. I said "good bye Willie, if you were only a christian, I should not feel near so bad; now, if you die, I shall never see you again."

"Nonsense, Gypsie! I'll be home all right sometime—I'm not going to die so young. Good bye!" with a kiss he was gone.

Sitting sorrowfully at home, I was alone in the midst of many. Willie had always been my dearest companion, to him alone I had opened my mind about many things. Nightly I prayed he might be saved from death; hourly I wept lest he should die unsaved. In answer to a letter I had written him about these fears, and asking him to come to Christ, he wrote, "Little Gypsie, I am waiting for the gift of God—that faith which is to save me, and which I cannot have of myself. I have tried to have faith in him, and lacking, I have asked of him who giveth to all men liberally, but I could not have asked aright, for it has not yet come. Little sister, have faith for me—does not his mercy endure forever? How can you expect *me* to believe, when your *own* faith is so weak? I strive for peace continually, but do not gain it. I cry with David, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord according to thy loving kindness; according to thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.' I pray 'Lord all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee! Let me give you some advice, sister mine. 'Fret not thyself because of evil doers. Trust in the Lord, and do good. Delight thy self also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.' There, my sister, am I not almost as good a preacher as my father? What a pity I could not feel it my duty to enter the ministry! How much they lose by my unbelief!"

I could not rest thus, I prayed and strove for the salvation of my loved one, but never did I feel as though he would come to Jesus. At last, among the names of the killed, I found my precious brother's. I did not weep, as did my parents, I sat down and said, There is no God of Love, or he would never have taken away my only brother, and cast him into outer darkness, he was not bad, he did not deserve it: his only sin was unbelief and he tried hard to believe."

"Father told me I must leave all to God; with him all things were possible. My answer was, Does he save the unbeliever?"

"No" said Father, "he cannot do that; but perhaps our dear Willie believed at the last." I took out the last epistle received from him, and read, "My darling sister, we are on the eve of a great battle, and perhaps it may be my last, many better than I, and who had as loving friends to mourn for them, have given their lives, in their country's cause; and I somehow feel that I shall be called upon to lay down mine to-morrow. I wish I could tell you what you so much wish me to, that I have 'made my peace with God' as you call it: but I cannot realize that I ever was at variance with him. I do not remember that I ever, wittingly, disobeyed him. My dear Gypsie, if that is the case, how can he cast me off entirely? You know, my dear, we cannot believe of ourselves, and will he punish us for what he withholds from us? *I* do not believe it. I have never found the rest I sought, although I have striven hard for it. Father told us He would never refuse to answer the penitent's, prayer; but I have prayed with sorrow for any wrong I might have done, and He has never given me peace.—Gypsie, if we never meet again, may God keep you, and may you never feel the unrest of unbelief I suffered. Do not, if you are satisfied, ever investigate the scriptures too thoroughly, for that is the rock on which I split."

This letter, written the last night of his life, was not the consolation I needed. Could it be possible my precious brother was lost? Once I said, "If Willie is in hell, I want to go there too. I wished I were a Catholic, so I might have the consolation of doing something to get him out of purgatory; and I tried to believe they were right, anyway.

One night I retired to rest in my unhappy frame of mind; nothing to comfort me, Willie was in eternal torment, and I could not rest. I had not been long in bed, when I felt a sweet peace come over me, and, opening my eyes Willie stood before me, a bright, happy smile on his face. "Little Sister," said he, "be contented, this land is not what I expected to find it. I am truly happy, and have everything I need for perfect peace and joy. Verily, if this be *hell*, none need desire a *heaven*. But, if this be *heaven*, what did *I* ever do to obtain *my* share of it. I rejected Christ as our savior, and had not the faith that saves. Sister mine, had you been happy in your present *belief*, or unbelief," he said with a meaning smile, "I should never have revived the old controversy, but you never would be contented until you knew I was not miserable, so I have come to set you at rest. Darling, the kingdom of heaven *is* within us; and so is all the hell we ever find; *you* have had more on my account than ever I experienced. Live peacefully! strive to do right, and you will not be cast out for want of faith in Christ. The rest I *warmly* sought, when on earth, I have FOUND."

Was it all a dream?

What Women are Doing.

METHODIST WOMEN VOTING.—Whatever merit may be attached to the cause of Woman's Suffrage, the Methodist Church of this city may justly claim the credit of giving the principle it embodies an ecclesiastical trial. Wednesday afternoon, May 26, for the first time in this state, perhaps in the country, the women of that great and prosperous denomination exercised the right of suffrage in voting for Trustees to take charge of the Great Camp Meeting, to be held at Sing Sing in August.

The arrangements for the election were commensurate with its importance. The pastor of every Wesleyan temple on this Island gave notice to his congregation on the previous Sunday, that five officers would be chosen to make preparations to receive the Methodist family in their beautiful retreat on the Hudson, and that the feminine members of the Church would have the right to vote. Of course the fair daughters of the Church took the hint and prepared for the contest.

It must be confessed that the struggle was one of a very exciting character, for many of the voters were known as "old campaigners" at Sing Sing; and they had in their own estimation "many wrongs to right." During the "last great day of the feast," nearly a year ago, they complained that there had not been a fair or judicious appropriation of tents on the ground, and they had threatened the Trustees that a day of reckoning should come, in which their places would know them no more. They have kept their word to the letter, by rejecting the names of the gentlemen who did not act with impartiality at the last camp meeting.

THE POLLS AT THE CHURCH.

It was arranged that the polls should be opened at five in the afternoon, and close at eight o'clock, and the lecture room of the church was selected for the purpose. A plain work-basket, placed on the cushioned lectern, served for a ballot-box, while brother Jas. W. Barker and Joel Sammis acted Inspectors, and Mr. Chas. A. Benedict as Secretary. Thus organized the contest was begun, and continued six hours.

SCOUTS WITH TICKETS.

Five tickets were placed in nomination—each not wholly different from the other, as printed, but a number of them were "scratched," in the ordinary political way. One of the peculiar features of this religious election was the presence of three elderly gentlemen, who took up their position in John and Nassau streets near the church, and begged their acquaintances as they passed to take their tickets. These "scouts" mentioned the names of their favorites and expected their friends to stand by them. "Don't scratch him" was an expression very frequently used, but seldom respected.

AN AVALANCHE OF LOVELINESS.

At six o'clock there was a brief recess, in which the officers of the polls took refreshments. When one of them had said grace after meat, he asked how many women had voted.

"Thirty-five," replied the Secretary.

"Ah," said Brother Barker, "we should have a large number of sisters here only for the rain."

"They'll come yet," said a hopeful elder, "You may depend on it, they'll be here before the polls close."

"Very likely," said Brother Barker, "for I know they take an interest in the election."

At this point the elder left the lecture-room and went to the sidewalk to ascertain whether his prediction was likely to be fulfilled. He returned in a few minutes with a smiling face, and addressing Mr. Sammis, exclaimed:

"They're coming—I told you they would be here. There's apparently a hundred of them walking down the street. They'll be voting directly."

And his words proved true, for before the Secretary could put down more numbers on his record, to show the whole vote, an avalanche of Methodist loveliness fell upon the polls, and each sister cast her ballot in the box.

"WHAT WE'RE COMING TO."

It was a noticeable fact that some of the women took charge of the ballots of the gentlemen who accompanied them, and gave them to Brother Barker, who deposited them in the basket. In one instance, a feminine member of the Allen street Church observed her husband coming to vote, and she at once rushed over to him and took the ticket out of his hand. Having examined it carefully, she gave it back to him and exclaimed:

"You may vote that, dear; that's all right."

This incident created considerable merriment.

Brother Barker remarked, "That's what we're coming to!"

THE TICKET ELECTED.

At half-past nine o'clock all the votes were counted, when it was announced that the following (regular) ticket was elected:

Trustees for three years—Charles H. Applegate, Daniel H. Roberts, John Falconer, William Truslow, and Richard Taylor.

The great question of lay delegation in the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States will probably be at rest for ever next month. The contest will be one of the most important in the history of the denomination, and it will be marked by a peculiar feature, which may be regarded as a significant sign of the times. The sisters of every church have been empowered to vote on the subject, and they will doubtless exercise the franchise the first time in casting their ballots to change their present mode of representation. It is optional, we believe, with the churches to hold the elections at any time in June, but the vote must be taken before August.—*Sun*

THE PRESENT AGE.

DORUS M. FOX, Editor.

MRS. S. A. HORTON, J. WILLIAM VAN NAMEE, PROF. E. WHIPPLE. } *Corresponding Editors.*

DR. F. L. H. WILLIS, - Editor New York Department.

All communications for this Department should be addressed, No. 16 West 24th St., New York City.

J. S. LOVELAND, F. L. WADSWORTH, } Editors of Western Department.

All communications for this Department should be addressed to J. S. Loveland, Monmouth, Ill., or F. L. Wadsworth, 183 Superior St., Chicago.

Kalamazoo, Saturday, June 26, 1869.

Reform in Prison Discipline.

Some of our readers, who have given but little attention to this subject; and calling to mind the fact, that we have thrice editorially devoted a column of the AGE to its consideration; may perhaps conclude that we are unnecessarily agitating the question. But we are as confident, that were all the evidences we have before us, fully presented to them, of the vindictive punishment and the brutal treatment of the convicts in most of our prisons; they would realize as we do, the importance of the subject and its claims upon every citizen and philanthropist.

We call attention to the resolution passed by a unanimous vote at our State Convention last week—which will be found in the proceedings as published in another column of this paper. We are not aware that any religious body has previous to this, given any expression upon this subject; and we are glad to find the Spiritualists, as an Organization, among the first to take advanced steps in all the reformatory movements of the day. The sentiments expressed in the resolution, may appear extremely ultra and radical, which we admit, and at the same time declare that they are no more so than are absolutely demanded.

We are aware that societies have been formed for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the criminal, and to some extent introducing reforms, but in our judgment none have laid the ax "at the root of the tree." We desire to change the whole system of punishment so as to make it solely, and only reformatory and curative in its character, and have all the arrangements and surroundings of the prison such as shall minister to the highest good, not of the public (except incidentally) but the *individual* most deeply concerned.

We have been favored the present week, with the annual report of the "PHILADELPHIA SOCIETY, FOR ALLEVIATING THE MISERIES OF PUBLIC PRISONS, forwarded to us by Chas. I. Perot Esq., of Philadelphia, accompanied by the following letter:

Mr. Editor—I send for your perusal a copy of the Annual Report of our "Philada Society for alleviating the miseries of Public Prisons," an association of Philanthropists instituted upwards of eighty years ago, which takes much pride in being the founders of the separate (not solitary) system of confinement. Charles Dickens in his "Notes on American Travel," not fully understanding the operation of the Pennsylvania system, did much toward prejudicing the minds of the community, against this excellent plan, by which the old convict is separated entirely from his former partners in crime, and the young one from the contaminating associations of those who might confirm him in a course of evil. The system is not 'solitary' as you will observe, but tends toward reforming the criminal by surrounding him with moral and religous influences, looking to his comfort, and kind treatment while in prison, as well as welfare on his return to society.

Other systems are reviewed and compared, together with matters of interest to all reformers.

Very Truly &c., CHARLES P. PEROT.

PHILADELPHIA, June 9th, 1869.

This report is published in pamphlet form, and contains one hundred pages of matter, so deeply interesting, that the reader will be loth to cease the perusal until finished. We make the following extracts:

"When we consider that the obligations of benevolence, which are founded on the precepts and example of the Author of Christianity, are not cancelled by the follies or crimes of our fellow creatures; and when we reflect upon the miseries which penury, hunger, cold, unnecessary severity, unwholesome apartments, and guilt, (the usual attendants of prisons,) involve with them, it becomes us to extend our compassion to that part of mankind who are the subjects of those miseries. By the aid of humanity, their undue and illegal sufferings may be prevented; the links which should bind the whole family of mankind together, under all circumstances, be preserved unbroken; and such degrees and modes of punishment may be discovered and suggested, as may, instead of continuing habits of vice, become the means of restoring our fellow-creatures to virtue and happiness."

The following expresses the sentiments as advocated by the PRESENT AGE:

"We would have all conducted with economy; we would have the great end of imprisonment obtained by the least expenditure possible; but we would not convert our State Penitentiaries and County Prisons into "galleys," where the end is punishment and instruction to the convict, and some profit to the State. Men who are sentenced for a certain number of years, it is expected will return to society, and, it is hoped, that they will come back improved, and that the evidences of improvement will be more manifest than that of punishment."

The following extract contains sentiments that ought to be inscribed in letters of gold in every public place: "SURETY OF PUNISHMENT IS A BETTER PREVENTIVE THAN CRUELTY, AND THE REFORM OF THE CRIMINAL IS OF MORE VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY THAN HIS PUNISHMENT."

The Coming Little Book.

"BIBLE TRUTHS CONTRASTED."

A gentleman of high standing writes us to know more of the *real scope* of this forthcoming work from our press—He says—

If Searcher, without note or comment of his own or others, has placed *in contrast* the teachings of the Bible upon Deity, Salvation, Damnation, Resurrection, Temptation, Woman, Marriage, Divorce, Chastity, Justice, Humanity, Temperance, Slavery &c., &c.,—the little book *will* be a wonder, (as you say in your notice of last week,) and truly astounding to the orthodox world; for these teachings have never been placed before us in the form you advertise forthcoming. The christian will seek, and read it with a devout interest, that he may know the whole truth, and "justify the ways of God to man." The Spiritualists will seek it with a still greater avidity; for, if the Bible is infallible, its teachings parallel and consistent with itself, he wants and needs to *know* it; and this I apprehend will give him a strong and *awakening light in one direction or the other*. You may set me down for a hundred copies, (it being so very cheap) to supply my friends and customers, both orthodox and heterodox."

We thank our correspondent most cordially for his confidence in the little work, now on the way to the public eye; and assure him, it is all, and even more, than he has indicated in his queries. Should the orthodox disapprove this little book, stultify themselves by *rejecting the words and teachings of their own Bible?* If Spiritualists and Liberalists read it carefully—as they most assuredly will—*it will show that they adore Truth, and detest Error*. We will duly announce its issue from the press.

The Marriage Question.

Our readers will recollect that Mrs. King two weeks since, in one of her interesting articles on the *present aspect of Spiritualism*, took occasion to allude to this subject, and uttered sentiments, so high, pure and noble in their character, that we wish they could be known, read, and practiced by all Spiritualists everywhere.

A writer from Ohio has taken exception to her position, and forwarded an article for publication; which, although it contains many good thoughts upon other subjects, yet is so extremely objectionable and enunciates sentiments so diametrically opposed to all our interests and highest impulses, whether considered socially or politically, that we cannot devote the space the long article, and a necessarily elicited answer, (perhaps many,) would occupy.

The following sentence embodies we suppose his idea, and we think will be all our readers desire, for certainly they would not bestow time to the reading of any arguments in favor of such an obnoxious proposition.

"There is no use in looking back. Marriage is dead and damned past hope of resurrection. Even if Spiritualists fly back to sustain it, they cannot; the surging masses of mankind are behind them and will bear them down, if they impeded their powers."

We believe the writer expresses the sentiment of very few Spiritualists in the above. We doubt not some such may be found among *all classes of society*; but we trust with confidence in the intelligence and virtue of the people, and do not fear the result, which the the writer himself predicts in the following sentence:

"I know very well what the destruction of marriage means. It means social anarchy, and I know it will come and is almost upon us. It must be provided for."

Our correspondent can, if he pleases, "provide" for it, we prefer to have faith in God, and the angels and with them work to prevent it. We quote again—

"The women are up in arms, Woman's Rights, the Elective Franchise, means death to the *man*-made marriage."

Perhaps so, *we* do not believe it, for earnestly as we desire that woman should have all her rights, including the elective franchise, we should hesitate in our support of these measures, if we conceived for a moment, that any such results would follow. We deny the charge. All its prominent advocates, such as the pure and noble Mrs. Livermore, Mary F. Davis, Susan B. Anthony, Mrs. Stanton, and scores of others through the columns of the *Revolution, Agitator*, and *Woman's Advocate*, deny it; and as truly and ardently as they labor for the accomplishment of their purpose, we are quite sure, did they anticipate any such result, they would at once cease their labor, and devote their energies and talents to other humanitarian objects.

In contrast with above, we quote from Mrs. King's article as published in the PRESENT AGE, dated June 12th, for no language of ours can equal the beautiful expression and purity of thought that glows in every sentence.

And further, when true Spiritualists take into consideration the important truth, that *purity is the watchword of their faith, and fidelity to the marriage relation, the safety of the State*; and that it is that alone which will secure to posterity the chance of carrying on the great work of human redemption commenced in the civilization of the present age, and to be consummated through the fidelity of successive generations to the just provisions of social order which are evolved by a progressing civilization, then will they hasten to shake from the folds of the beloved banner of Spiritualism, the dust of sensualism that clings to it, dimming the brightness of its colors, and, in the view of some, obliterating its motto. Unjust laws can be repealed, and just ones substituted in their stead; wrongs can be righted by the power of the people who hold the ballot; order can be elicited from confusion by a people whose instincts are in favor of justice and order; but where is the hope of humanity when all its divine instincts are blunted or destroyed from the effects of the unbridled rule of the passions? When license takes the place of wholesome restraint in society, and none can say, *my* wife, or *my* husband is *my own*, by any rule of society, then will be brought to pass the saying of the prophet; that, "the dog has returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire,"—then will Barbarism of the lowest type have succeeded to the civilization of an age that recognizes nature's divine institution, *Marriage* as the bulwark of society and all progress.

Michigan State Convention.

The Semi-Annual Convention of the Michigan Association of Spiritualists convened at Adrian, 11th, 12th, and 13th inst., was one of the most harmonious and successful we have ever attended in the State. The attendance was large and composed of some of the most intelligent and oldest Spiritualists of Michigan. The proceedings throughout, which will be found in brief in another column, were marked by deliberation, and a sincere earnestness of purpose, seldom witnessed. The following persons were by a unanimous vote elected delegates to the National Convention, with power, in case of inability to attend, to appoint substitutes: Dorus M. Fox, J. C. Dexter, Allison Kinne, D. B. Harrington, S. Kies, Mrs. S. A. Horton, Mrs. E. S. Samm, and Mrs. M. J. Fowler. For further particulars see report of Secretary.

Found.

We call attention to the well written article, with above title on our first page. The Author is a young lady of Van Buren Co, Mich., from whom we hope to hear again. We call it a story,—but it is not a fiction, the characters are true to the life and the incidents occurred as related—similar to tens of thousands during the last war, wherein almost countless numbers of our soldiers, fell "unconverted" and and without the "saving faith" which was so earnestly sought by Willie. Where are those fallen heroes, according to orthodoxy?

From Dayton Ohio.

L. D. Wilson writes us a brief account of his visit at the rooms of Mrs. Shaffers, in Dayton, where he witnessed some very convincing manifestations, He says;

The Spirits speak through a trumpet without any contact with the Medium, and all the surrounding circumstances are such, that however sceptical the visitor may be, his judgment must be convinced that he is face to face with departed friends. Names, dates, and facts are stated with such unerring certainty that none can go away without admitting how strange, how wonderful a thing it is. I have often thought the Spiritual papers of the country ought to keep this before the public mind. I experienced more satisfaction in three sittings at Dayton, than in all the rest of the tests I have ever witnessed.

From our Corresponding Editors.

Public Opinion.

The belief so long current, that God and religion should be sought in the creed and ceremonial instead of consulting the soul itself—that religion is revealed *to* man instead of being revealed *in* man, has led to other equally mistaken notions regarding the sources of happiness and conduct of life. All are seeking for happiness, and yet the world bewails in disappointment. The reward is not commensurate with the labor and sacrifice, and at the conclusion of earthly pursuits and struggles, most of us feel like exclaiming, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." We are confronted with disappointed expectations at each succeeding step in the life journey, the mean time persuading ourselves that human existence is a failure.

If we would refrain from charging Dame Fortune with our disappointments, and reflect on the causes of our ills, it is possible we should discover ourselves, seeking in the external baubles and artificial trappings of life for life itself. Instead of developing the interior resources of individual character, of becoming self-poised and self-sustaining, we are sacrificing our selfhood by bowing in abject slavery to the arbitrary standards set up by a false public sentiment. The source of happiness is rarely recognized to consist in the conscious possession of manhood or womanhood, but it is thought to consist in the approving smiles of public opinion. If the favorable estimation of "Lady Grundy" can be obtained, no sacrifice is too great to secure such a precious boon. Physical comfort, conscience, health, moral principle, personal enjoyment, are unhesitatingly sacrificed at this soulless shrine. Does a morbid public taste require a small waist?

The physical vigor of maidenhood and the prospective destiny of unborn children are small considerations. This moloch must be satisfied, and our daughters are all too eager to appease the idol god. Does madam G. propose to alter the fashions once a month? Individual tastes must be waived; the fashion must be conformed to, however ridiculous and absurd, and the time which should be devoted to become respectable in thought, is employed to become respectable in outward appearance, not to gratify the individual taste for beauty, but to secure the approval of a morbid public taste. Does public sentiment acquiesce in the popular forms of worship? Then the Martin Luthers, and George Foxes, and John Wesleys, and Jackson Davises, must suppress the great thoughts which rise in their souls for expression, quiet the surges of spiritual truth which roll their dashes beyond the circumscribed limits of old conservatism, and seek no other exhibition of their powers than the mumbling of the ritual prepared by their forefathers, so that the proprieties of genteel life may not be disturbed. Does modern politeness assume that Woman is in her *proper* sphere? It is enough! The prejudices engendered by masculine rule must be allowed to foist themselves into a criterion, by which to regulate feminine activity; and the criterion thus formed, must have precedence over the instincts of the Woman soul. It matters not how much Woman's actual sphere may antagonize with her aspirations; it matters not that she may crave opportunities parallel with her powers; the opinions of the past have carved the grooves of her destiny, and set limitations to the feminine orbit; public opinion sanctions the accredited standard, and to this standard the feminine career must forever be subordinate, in as much as Woman was made for the institutions of society, instead of the customs of the world being framed to conserve the highest ends of individual existence.

Here lies the secret of disappointment so universal in society. In our attempts to conserve public opinion, we have cheated our own souls, and surrendered our resources to a court of inquisition that deals in gossip and lies. We yield up our individuality and become dependents, servants, slaves, in the presence of a merciless tribunal, that should in reality perform the office of servant to the individual. The public sentiment that should aid us in the development of individual character, we allow to enslave us. But the blame does not rest particularly with the public. It depends on each man and woman, whether their relations to society shall prove a mutual curse or a mutual blessing. E. W.

VINELAND, N. J., June 4th, 1869.

DEAR "AGE:" Next Sunday is my last here; for four weeks I have spoken for the society, held public circles, and given private sittings; and all who have received communications or had clairvoyant readings, have expressed themselves satisfied. I go to Troy, New York, on Sunday, the 20th of June. In Vineland I have met warm, true hearts, whose sympathy and kindness have lightened my labors here; whose words of encouragement have made me strong to do the right, and may angels bless them, and strew in their earth paths bright blossoms of peace and joy.

The world is full of happy life; every tree is vocal with bird's songs; the little brown chipping birds come upon the sill of my window in couples, and make the softest, sweetest music for me while I write. As I glance over the garden dotted with its varied colored flowers, and inhale their sweet perfume, they speak to my soul of God and love, and just beyond the flower beds the bright red strawberries glow among the green leaves. This delicious fruit is so plenty here, and they are now just in season.

O these long, bright days in the country, where the birds sing us songs, and the flowers breathe out their fragrance all day long. The city with all its turmoil is far away, and the days glide by, these sweet, bright, peaceful days—each one bringing rich gifts of peace and joy; and we will delight in them while we may, forgetting in the mean time that the roses will ever fade, the leaves ever fall, or the snow ever again cover the green, beautiful earth.

"Are we then free, or is it yet a vain
Assertion and an empty boast?
Is there unbroken yet a single chain,
And have these years of toil been only lost?
Does our old banner wave without a spot
To dim its bars, or does it bear
Still on its stripes and stars the hateful blot
Which slavery and treason printed there?
Does prejudice still bind us as with chains?
Then vainly did our martyr heroes bleed,
If yet our flag is marred with blots or stains,
Our boast is vain; we have not yet been freed.
Is yet by us the brotherhood of man
Unrecognized? and is our brother still
Deprived of manhood, and placed under ban,
And doomed in peonage our lands to till?
Brothers, it must not, and it cannot be,
These years of valiant speech and deadly strife
Were but the birth pangs of *true* liberty.
In them was born the nature's higher life.
Stand, then, like men—the crisis, it is grand;
And, in the vigor of a new found youth,
Gather our altars round; uplift the hand,
And vow to keep for aye blood-purchased truth,
By all the memories of our conflicts past,
Manhood and suffrage to the freedman give;
Wipe out the lines of color and of caste;
"Do justly," and the nation still will live;
Will live to keep aglow the sacred flame
On Freedom's altar; and this land shall be
A refuge for the oppressed; its very name
The synonym for Truth and Liberty."

Hastily thine, J. W. V. N.

REPORT

Of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Michigan Association of Spiritualists, at Adrian, Friday, June 11th, 1869.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Col. D. M. Fox. Mrs. Hattie Hamilton of Port Huron, sung the opening song, followed by an invocation by Rev. A. J. Fishback.

Mrs. S. A. Horton and Mr. Fishback severally addressed the large audience during the remainder of the evening. Sister Horton's words, as always, breathed forth the spirit of harmony and charity; urging us to the necessity of associative effort, for TRUTH was ours, and if with love and charity for each other, we met, we should receive an immeasurable abundance, for love is a part of God, and He is our Father, who has sent his angel messengers with the lighted torch of Truth, to bear it before us; and every gleam from this light cheers us on our way, while they, clasping their hands in ours, deal not out sparingly, for their mission to earth is the "*Triumph* of TRUTH." The cause of Progress will be advanced by our earnestness in the cause of God and right.

Brother Fishback's sparkling earnestness in declaring "Why he was a Spiritualist," won him hosts of friends, because he was obedient to the Truth when found. A truth sustained by *facts* and *knowledge*, is a *power* untold, over the human mind; for it, he was willing to bear all the odium cast on us, by those who see not as we see. Telegraphing was a *truth*, and its power was established in spite of sneers and contempt. Greater still is the *mental telegraph* with its subtile connections between mankind and the kingdom of God above; we *know* this *truth*, and are willing to suffer socially, for declaring that there is a connection between man on earth and in Heaven. The President then announced the committees:

Order of Business—Daniel B. Harrington, George Bansill, Mr. Goddard, and Mrs. Chandler.

On Finance—George Bansill, Mr. Wilbur, S. M. Farlin, Mrs. Hattie Hamilton, and Mrs. Rounds.

On Resolutions—Mr. Fishback, Mr. William Bryan, and Mrs. S. A. Horton.

The Delegates then presented their credentials.

[We omit the names of Delegates on account of the crowded state of our columns.—ED.]

The Convention then adjourned until Saturday morning, at 9 o'clock, when after a song by Mrs. Hamilton, an hour was occupied in Conference. Brother Fishback encouraged us to be worthy of the noble cause we advocate, fearlessly, yet kindly whipping those who differ with us *in the light*, though they usually whip *us* in the *dark*. A gentle *voice* was then heard greeting us with a loving welcome, in poetic measure. Where so many spoke well, 'twould seem invidious to extol one and not another; still the strong, earnest confession of knowledge—not faith—of the octagenarian, Brown, strengthened many truth seekers, while the cord of sympathy seemed tightened, as that rich toned Brother Bryan, compared the young Spiritualist's path and rest to a travel worn and burdened Camel's joy, when he sees the longed for oasis in the desert, feeling sure of the cool shade under the green palm trees, and refreshing draughts from its sparkling fountains.

Mrs. Jane Fowler, then addressed the audience in a clear, analytical, logical lecture. Subject, "The Three Bibles." 1st. The Bible of Nature. 2nd. The Divine Bible as developed in man. 3d. The man worshipped Bible, or the "Little Bible."

A synopsis of this masterly effort would seem impossible, so intimately connected was one sentence with another. In Nature's Bible, she showed how immortality is hourly taught, leading us on, to man the ultimate, the platform made for Deity to manifest himself through. Divine revelation cannot be *written*. *You*, are the great Bible,—how great a duty then rests on every soul in the universe. Belief changes, but principles never change. Christ taught that "God was in man," yes, the Deity is the emanation of the Divine principles in the little Bible. As comprehension depends on organization, each one views nature according to their capacity. Her explanation of the orthodox "Trinity" was fine; as represented in man—*one* divine nature; but a *three-fold* demonstration, *three* representatians of *one* principle—Physical, Mental and Spiritual, the mental forces being the most powerful.

2 O'CLOCK P. M.

The Convention was called to order by the President and the committee on Resolutions presented the following:

Resolved, That the pure interests of mankind can best be advanced through the teachings and promulgations of Spiritualism, for *all* of *philosophy*, *all* of *science*, *all* of *literature*, and *all* of *truth*, necessary to elevate the human family are contained within its enfoldments.

Resolved, That one of the best methods to regenerate the world is to aid our children by preventing their learning, what we, as Spiritualists had to *unlearn*. This aid can be found in the Children's Progressive Lyceum which should be every where sustained.

Resolved, That the PRESENT AGE has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its publishers, and only needs the extended patronage of the people to secure its permanent success and future usefulness.

Resolved, That this Convention recognize no special rights of any class, defined by sex or color, but only recognize human rights for all mankind and consider the right of suffrage to be one of the most sacred and inalienable. WM. BRYANT, Chairman.

After some remarks made by Mr. Ormsby, Mr. Fishback, Mrs. Horton, Frank Reed and Col. Fox, these resolutions were unanimously adopted.

EVENING SESSION—SEVEN ONE-HALF O'CLOCK.

Brother Fishback's fine address will no doubt, appear in full. His sparkling bursts of enthusiasm electrified the audience, who warmly applauded him.

The subject given Mrs. Reed for a poem was, "can spirits keep mortals from danger and wrong doing, and do they?" Rapidly but ingeniously this question was woven into rhyme and distinctly answered: proving to the satisfaction of the questioner, that we must work out our own salvation; pay the penalty for every wrong; find no scape-goat, for responsibility is our own, even though angel guides may council. (Applause was sincere.)

SUNDAY MORNING SESSION.

Called to order by the President, at 9 o'clock for a Conference. Convention opened by a soul-inspiring prayer by Mrs. S. A. Horton.

Father Woodruff urged us to dig out of old paganism, 'twas idolatry to pray to any one—he was tough and could afford to speak the truth—Answered beautifully by Mr. Stacey of Jackson in defence of prayer, to God and to friends here, and those gone before. L. Barnum thought that "ask and ye shall receive" came home with an unresistive force.

Mr. Bryan thought that father Woodruff could ride his own velocipede, he was a self sustaining institution, but if any poor cripples needed aid, let them pray for it, let the God within seek the God without, and the hand terrestial grasp the hand celestial; he believed in a continual prayer, going upward and onward to aid the true interests of humanity, with which prayer, hands work, mouth talks, and feet walk; this kind of prayer is answered in sweet blessings on the children of men.

The President, was pleased with the freedom of thought and harmony in our differences.

Music by the choir, followed by an invocation by Mrs. Horton. Mrs. Jane Fowler then addressed the audience, on the subject of

NATURAL LAW.

By natural law the influences controlled the medium; through the positive and negative forces, man was becoming conscious of immortality. The Jews prayed for a Messiah. Through natural laws he came, a medium, poor and despised. God works in the still small voice, concentrated in the hearts of men. The Jews opened the *only* door for man's salvation; why then call them wicked? They, by natural law, killed the man whose words and power they feared; but CHRIST was *not* crucified, for Christ is a *principle*, and principles never die. Regeneration was a natural outgrowth from the Jewish dispensation; regenerate yourselves; be true to yourselves; harmonize your physical with the Divine within you; reach the angel in your own breasts—this is putting on immortality, becoming a law unto yourselves. Jesus condemned not the Jewish teaching, but only gave them the 11th commandment—"Love one another." Trust in the God within you, for you are the centerstance of the universe, and salvation is ours through the living principle of the Christ in ourselves; ever falling upward instead of downward, till you grasp the angel hands—our guide posts in the work of regeneration. The Bible has been to us the Ark of safety, but the Dove—Aspiration, went out and soon found that there is a God in nature, and mightier truths are found outside than within its pages. Let the world seek to expose Spiritualism; the more it's exposed, the more it's improved, the more it's comprehended.

A song by the choir, and a benediction by Mrs. Reed closed the Forenoon's exercises.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The exercises were opened by an invocation in rhyme, by Mr. Charles Farlin, of Deerfield, followed by an address.

[We are reluctantly compelled to omit the very able Lectures of Mrs. Reed and Mrs Horton and also of Dr. Barnum—ED.]

The new Trustees elected by the Convention on Saturday to fill vacancies were John C. Dexter, Ionia County; A Kinne, Kalamazoo Co; W. B. Barron, St. Clair County; Charles A. Case, Adrian; George Bansill, Hillsdale County; all of whom were unanimously elected.

The Delegates elected to attend the National Convention were Mrs. S. A. Horton, Mass; Mrs. Jane Fowler, Adrian; John C. Dexter, Ionia; D. M. Fox, Kalamazoo; A Kinne, Kalamazoo; S. Kies, Hillsdale; D. B. Harrington, St. Clair; Mrs. E. S. Samm, Hillsdale;

The same Delegates were elected to attend the National Lyceum Convention. Moved and seconded that delegates unable to go can appoint a substitute, and if at Buffalo a vacancy occurs, the Board can fill that vacancy.

SUNDAY EVENING SESSION, SEVEN ONE-HALF O'CLOCK.

The President called the meeting to order, when Mrs. Frank Reed sung one of A. B. Whiting's compositions, and Mrs. Horton made a beautiful invocation for spirit aid and blessing.

Dr. Barnum then addressed the audience on "The conflict of the Ages." The Committee on Resolutions then offered the following:

Whereas, As Spiritualists in Convention assembled, we deem it our duty to give expression to our sentiments, on all questions relating to the diversified interests of Humanity: We do hereby express our sympathy for all our suffering fellow men wherever found, whether suffering from the evils incident to our present system, or confined in asylums prepared for the Deaf, Dumb, Blind or Insane; And also with those who have less of public sympathy because they have been confined in prisons on account of crime, therefore:

Resolved, That we are fully convinced, that all of our unfortunate fellow beings convicted of crime should be sent to Prisons, conducted upon the same principles now prevailing in our best conducted asylums; *i e*, solely for the reformation of the offender, and the moment a cure is apparent, the criminal should be released, and any further punishment becomes vindictive in its character—Therefore, we will henceforth labor to convince the public that all criminals should be treated as morally diseased and ought to be treated with the same kindness as are persons sent to hospitals and asylums. And further; that the profit derived from their labor, should be paid to their families and friends; instead of being paid as under our present system to avaricious contractors.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention are hereby tendered to the Spiritualists of Adrian, for their generous hospitality, on the present occasion, as manifested in the free use of their Hall, and the entertainment of Delegates to the Convention.

Both resolutions unanimously adopted.

Two subjects were given Mrs. Reed to form a poem which she ingeniously wove together, the nature and dignity of the God-head, and Truth and Reason man's saviour. The attention of the audience and the applause which followed, testified to its merit and originality.

Col Fox, then made a short statement of the condition of the cause in Michigan and thanking the Convention for their kindness and attention, it adjourned to meet again next January. SARAH E. WEYBURN,
Sec. Michigan Association of Spiritualists.

For the Present Age.

The Value of a Kind Word.

BY MRS. MARIA M. KING.

A stoical looking land-lord was giving orders to his stable boy, in a tone that indicated his determination to frighten the boy into obedience, or take his life in case he failed in the smallest particular to do his bidding. "You good-for-nothing rascal! you shall never see day-light if you don't leave this stable in good order to-night. You are the laziest scamp in this town; and you only want to sponge your living out of some decent man that will keep you, out of pity." Thus for some minutes did the master rail at the boy, who leisurely continued his work, grumbling in his teeth, and taking no great pains to save his life, if one might judge from the aspect the stable bore the next morning.

As the traveler who had listened to the land-lord's harsh words on the occasion alluded to, entered the stable in the morning to look after his horse, he found his host there before him, and endeavoring to put the animal in suitable condition to deliver to his owner. "I charged the groom to put your horse in the best order," said the irritated man, "and see how he has left him! I keep that boy just out of pity. He has a mother I respect very much and she begs of me every time I see her to make something out of him if possible. I talk to him every day, but it is wasting breath." "John, you block-head! I have been doing your work over as usual." John appeared, looking, indeed, more like a block-head than an attentive, industrious boy. The traveler accosted him with a "good-morning," and said out of hearing of the master, "I am sorry to hear your master complain of you. John, you should do your best to please him. He seems kindly disposed toward you, and tells me your mother is very anxious that you do something for yourself." John looked the traveler in the eye, and said: "Sir, did you ever know a dog that was good for anything, that was kicked about? I might do ever so well, but I should get no credit for it. I would serve a man as faithfully as my mother could wish, if he would give me, now and then, a kind word. I have all I want to make me comfortable here, sir, but I will leave *and starve* before I will be treated so, and have my character ruined besides, for he tells every one that stops here just such a story as he has told you." "John," said the traveler, "stay, and try to be a man for your mother's sake, and for your own. Why, you are almost a man now, and the country needs just such stout, ambitious boys as you are, or can be, to make men of, to help make the laws and govern it. I see in your eye, that you will bye-and-bye be something besides a *stable boy* if you begin now." John whistled and went to his work, saying not a word in answer to the kind admonitions of the stranger. The latter went on his way, soon forgetting the incident.

This traveler was a man of note in the country, and in the course of years occupied a high position in the Congress of the United States. He was thus accosted, one day, by a fellow member—a young man who had but just entered: "Do you know me, sir?" "I know you as Mr.—, from—. I never, to my knowledge, had the honor of a personal acquaintance with you." "You have not the same reason for remembering me, that I have you, sir," said the first speaker. "You are the man that aroused the first glimmering of real ambition in me, that I had ever felt. I was kicked and cuffed about by heartless masters until I was fifteen; and had lost, at that age, all courage, and was fast sinking into a vagabond; when you *inspired me with the spirit of a man*, by speaking kindly to me and pointing to a promising future. *It was in a stable where my Christ was born*, and a savior it has proved to me. Do you remember me now?" The old man recalled the incident, and shaking his young friend's hand heartily, inquired what he had said on that occasion to impress him so strongly. "It was, in the first place, your kind "*good morning*," that made me feel that I was a human being; and then you talked to me in a reasonable manner, and appealed to the manhood that was really in me, though it did not exhibit itself to you on that occasion, I am aware. I went straight to my work, and worked like a man that day, and my employer looked with astonishment at everything my hands touched. He did not praise me, however, but kept a rigid silence when he could not find fault. I left him in a short time, and have worked my way up, having for my motto, the country needs just such stout, ambitious boys as you are, to make men of, to help make the laws and govern it."

Who will doubt that, as the old man listened to this strange story, his bosom glowed with joy, that he had thus pointed the pathway of one of earth's worthy sons, to an honorable position in society? It was so easy to say "good morning" to a stable boy as he was about to serve him. Who would not do it? Do not work-boys, whose clothes are soiled and bespeak poverty and negligence, bear the image of manhood, and claim what is due to human nature wherever it is found? Ah! old man, it was easy for you, who possessed the spirit of a true man, to recognize the right of a boy, no matter what his character might be, to *kind words—encouragement*. You knew what would reach the *human nature* of a boy, and you possessed enough human kindness to reach after the manliness of this "*blockhead*." Would to heaven there were more possessed of your spirit among the masters and mistresses, fathers and mothers of the land, than there are!

Said a little girl seven years old to a kind lady who asked her why she appeared so filthy, and was so impertinent to those who accosted her; "I dont care; I always feel cross, cos mother whips me, and father too; and I cant play in the street or in the house. There's a great boy that plagues me when I go round the corner when mother lets me go sometimes; and the girls are all so mean; I dont like any of them." What a sermon on family management, and the influences that children exercise upon each other!

"My daughter," said a mother to her child seven years old, whom she was about to send on an errand in a stormy day, and whose garments were thin and scanty, "you must hurry by where Susan lives, for she may trouble you; and I am anxious for you to be back soon. Should you meet your playmates, dont stop a moment, for it storms and you must not be out long." The child returned in good season, and reported to her mother that she had been stopped "*seven times*;" "but I told them, said she, that mother would not be pleased if I stayed to play with them. *Wer'nt they kind?* I like Susan; but most all the girls hate her because they say she's mean to them; but I talk to her and show her my things, and tell her stories that you tell me, and she always lets me pass without giving me much trouble." The kind, "*my daughter*" spoken by the mother, gives the clue to the loving nature of that daughter's disposition toward her mates. Enough such mothers would fill the world with philanthropists; and soon there would be no need of one saying to his neighbor; "Know the Lord, for all would know him from the least to the greatest."

Medium's and Speaker's Convention in Western New York.

The Medium's and Speaker's quarterly meeting met at Johnson's Creek, Niagara Co., May 22nd, and again was enjoyed a "Feast of reason and a flow of soul," as no other meetings so largely send forth and exhibit, as do these same gatherings, which are becoming a permanent institution in Western New York, called and instituted as they were, under the inspirational direction of brother Seaver, of Byron.

The meeting was largely attended by persons from different portions of the State, many Counties being represented.

John Sybrant was chosen to preside, and S. A. Burtis as Secretary.

Appropriate and instructive addresses from J. W. Seaver, Mrs. Luddington of Holley, the venerable Warren Clark of Gasport, and others, characterized the morning session, a beautiful symbol was seen, and given by Mrs. Hazen of Buffalo. A communication was read by brother Seaver, written by his hand from the spirit of brother Smedley, who had not long since left his earth-home in that vicinity, and who was an early advocate of our religion.

N. Frank White being in attendance, was invited to occupy the afternoon session. The audience had the pleasure of listening to one of the most profound, logical, as well as radical Lectures from our brother, much to their edification—and to whom the meeting tendered a vote of thanks, for the able and deep searching truths uttered on that occasion.

The evening gathering was formed into a large family circle, and participated in, by many of the speakers present.

2nd. Day at 9 A. M. found earnest hearts assembled, to mingle their sympathies, and swell the tide of harmonious feeling which characterized and signally crowned this assembly. The President opened the meeting with some happy remarks, when Brother Clum arose and said, that at the Cleveland Convention, an old veteran in Spiritualism of nearly eighty summers, remarked "that he was only nineteen years of age," that remark was very significant, however many years had passed over us, we had not begun the real life, until we embraced this new born religion; that he (the speaker) was but three years old, that it had opened up to his mind, the defects and improprieties of his own life, and by its light he had been enabled to reform from many habits, which would have an effect on his everlasting existence.

An address was listened to with almost breathless attention from Mrs. Nettie Maynard, the Hall being crowded, and not able to contain all who desired to listen. Near the close of her Lecture, the influence controlling, paid a merited tribute to the untiring efforts and labors of Brother Seaver, to which he responded in a beautiful manner.

The meeting was gladdened and refreshed by sweet songs by the choir, at intervals throughout the two day's session. A vote of thanks was passed to the friends for their hospitality to the officers of the meeting, and to Mr. Seaver, for his untiring labors. It was agreed that the next meeting be postponed for six months, as the Picnic for July at Niagara Falls, and the National Convention in September being near each other, it was not deemed expedient to call a meeting for the next quarter.

It can be truly said, that these meetings possess more harmony, beauty and inspiration than almost any others, as all present feel a freedom to speak the thoughts within them, with a spontaneity not always found in larger meetings, where conventionalities have to be observed more or less closely. The resolutions adopted are as follows:

Resolved, That while we as Mediums, and advocates of the Spiritual Philosophy, have great cause for congratulation in our exemption from the sanguine persecutions of past ages, by immolation, strangulation, and public executions of the Spiritually inspired, (and of the so called witches, seers &c.) yet we still recognize the same spirit of animosity and ostracism in this day, as exhibited by religious opposers, and by many authors, and journalists, and also by certain aspirants to political power, through a union of church and state policies; Therefore we exhort all friends of civil and religious liberty, to incessant labor, to disseminate and enforce the principles of civil and religious liberty.

Resolved, That in view of the persistent efforts of many American Journalists, in opposition to the truths of Spiritualism by misrepresentation, stigmas and burlesque, merits just rebuke at the hands of the hundreds of thousands of American Spiritualists, and we would suggest the propriety of encouraging and patronizing those periodicals and newspapers, which fairly present the glorious, scientific and religious truths developed in modern Spiritualism. SARAH A. BURTIS,
ROCHESTER, June 6th, 1869. Secretary.

NEW YORK DEPARTM'T.

FRED. L. H. WILLIS, M. D., - - - Editor.

All communications for this Department should be addressed, No. 16 West 24th St., New York City.

ONLY THE CLOTHES THAT SHE WORE.

(Recently, at the Morgue in this City, the attire of a drowned person alone remained for identification.)

There is the hat
With the blue veil thrown round it, just as they found it,
Spotted and soiled, stained and all spoiled—
Do you recognize that ?

The gloves, too, lie there,
And in them still lingers, the shape of her fingers,
That some one has pressed, perhaps, and caressed,
So slender and fair.

There are the shoes,
With their long silken laces still bearing traces,
To the toe's dainty tip, of the mud of the slip,
The slime and the ooze.

There is the dress,
Like the blue veil, all dabbled, discolored, and drabbled—
This you should know, without doubt, and, if so,
All else you may guess !

There is the shawl,
With the striped border, hung next in order,
Soiled hardly less than the light muslin dress,
And that is all.

Ah ! here is a ring
We were forgetting, with a pearl setting ;
There was only this one—name or date ?—none !
A frail, pretty thing ;

A keepsake, maybe,
The gift of another, perhaps a brother,
Or lover, who knows ? him her heart chose,
Or was she heart-free ?

Does the hat there,
With the blue veil around it, the same as they found it,
Summon up a fair face with just a trace
Of gold in the hair ?

Or does the shawl,
Mutely appealing to some hidden feeling,
A form, young and slight, to your mind's sight,
Clearly recall ?

A mantle now has passed,
And her sad history remains yet a mystery,
But these we keep still, and shall keep until
Hope dies at last.

Was she the prey
Of some deep sorrow, clouding the morrow,
Hiding from view the sky's happy blue ?
Or was there foul play ?

Alas who may tell ?
Some one or other, perhaps a fond mother,
May recognize these when her child's clothes she sees,
There—will it be well ?

The above sweet and tender, though tragical lines from Appleton's Journal of June 19th derive increased interest from the fact that they are the last ever penned by their author, Mr. N. G. Shepherd. Within a few hours after receiving from the Messrs Appleton the price of his verses, he died from the effects of intemperance. He was well known as a writer for magazines, was genial, witty, gentle-hearted, and of very prepossessing manners. But he wrecked himself upon those fearful shoals and quicksands where so many of the most brilliant and best beloved have been lost on the voyage of life. His passion for strong drinks ruined him. And this pathetic poem may be regarded as a requiem for the author, as well as for the poor unknown whose fate it attempts to portray.

Who shall solve this fearful problem of intemperance? How shall this direful evil that works so much misery in human hearts and homes, and is the fruitful source of so much crime, be abolished ?

The craving for stimulants is the natural effect of the over excited condition our American people are always in. We are rushing forward toward every extreme. We do nothing decently and in order. Fast, is the word in every direction. Fast matches, fast horses, fast men, and fast boys. We all live too fast. The intellectual man, wearies his brain and wants more nerve force, and he calls for a supply in the shape of a stimulant, instead of taking his supply from nature through rest. The business man hurries to get rich, and wearied and exhausted, calls for his tobacco, his coffee, his brandy. The laborer puts every nerve to its keenest tension to get through his toil, and puts upon himself burdens he cannot long bear, and the result is, wearied nature claims rest which is not given, and then the demand is felt for the stimulant that makes rest unnecessary.

It seems to us the true way of reform in this direction consists in putting before men nobler ambitions, and leading them through obedience to nature's laws into that harmonious condition of body and spirit that calls for a life of reasonable gratification and reasonable labor to gain it.

Let us seek the best methods of educating men, and for the highest means of culture for our young men and women.

Heaven's law is one of severe justice. It metes out to the transgressor against any law of his being, the effect of that transgression, and it never steps aside from the divine law of retribution sooner or later ; but in all its operations, its tendency is to remove evil. It strives to overcome evil with good. When we can make men know this, they will look within for restraint, and find ever a power strong enough to lead them past all temptation into paths of usefulness and pleasantness.

Meantime let us do what we can to lift up the weak ones who fall, and throw the bread mantle of our love over all.

Miss Singleton's Correspondence.

I promised you, my dear Kitty, some ready news, or at least the assurance of my safe arrival in this little snuggery. But how insignificant do all my movements seem, in the grand movement that nature has been making. Oh, these June days ! Some one has called them delicious, and so they are, as are peaches and Delaware grapes and Catawba wine. They are full of beauty, and that means full of all goodness ; for is not true beauty satisfying ? and therefore is it not equivalent to virtue ?

I stepped from the dirty cars through a shaded road, into the dearest little cottage that you ever dreamed of. And my room, I can only describe it by telling you it looks out on to an orchard. I dare say you would rather hear about its carpet and chairs, and its little nicknacks, for your thought of beauty has been woven in looms or pricked into canvas, I am sorry to say. Why don't your father send you into the country ?

Well ! I must tell you that aunt Ruth, as people here all call her, is a little bit of an old maid, and she boards the minister, and he has the parlor for his study, and sleeps in the little room off of it. Now dont laugh and fancy some romance, for the Rev. Mr. Thornton is as unsentimental as possible, and takes his tea and coffee in a most common place way. He talks about the weather and a probable shower, with aunt Ruth, much as uncle Jim used to talk with you, and you know what a bore he always was.

I must tell you this very Mr. Thornton used to preach in the city and was very popular, but he lost his voice, and his popularity, and retired. He has a sort of disdainful way of looking at people, as if he felt himself on a little higher plane than common folks, though aunt Ruth assured me he was the most modest of men.

I was a little disappointed to find that I had no other companions than this old maid and old bachelor, and I did not quite approve of the course taken to get me here. I would have liked Ritchford Springs better, or some jolly farmers even, where I could toss hay and jokes at the same time, with the farmer's boys. But I must submit at least for a month. But I am resolved on a change then.

What would you say Kitty, to having a man look up from his steak and say, "Madam, *the sun has gone into a cloud*, we shall have rain." I am in doubt if the man knows anything, or if he thinks I do not. Some men think all women fools. I took a peep into his study—the door was open—and it was lined with books. But books dont make a student, and I dare say he dont know any more about Renan or Coleus than I do.

But I talk every moment about the minister, you will never know anything about the cheeses and the pots of butter and the deep well, and the cool cellar. There is where aunt Ruth reigns, and do you know Kitty, I am not sure but it is better to be queen there than to be only a servant in some other sphere. All my life I have been reaching out for intellectual pleasure, and trying to be some sort of a sovereign in the realm of letters, and what am I? Only a serving woman, and yet one that looks down upon those of other occupation, as if it were grander to read than to knit. When I see aunt Ruth going about in her realm, sole mistress there, and fully equal to all that she encounters, I feel humbled and like putting my books under the table.

I do believe, Kitty dear, that it is better to act well than to think well, and that a busy life close to good and pure things, is more like a poem than all the efforts to reel off other people's brains into one's own. Aunt Ruth has soft brown hair which she combs most smoothly, and she wears snowy white collars and white aprons, and unless I misjudge, Mr. Thornton thinks a deal of her, and will some day marry her. I amused myself thinking at breakfast table this morning what a splendid match it would be, she so quiet and home like, and he so stupid and homely. Did I tell you he has a great nose which you are sure to see the first thing when you look at him, and he *is as dark as a thunder cloud*—a real brown skin, and he has large bushy eye-brows, and a head large enough to represent Sampson, and he stoops a little and walks in a timid, hesitating way ? I could but wonder whether it was natural and his universal gait, or only the effect of my overpowering presence ; though it is true, as I told you, he takes not the least notice of me, or just the same that he does of aunt Ruth's cat. We have a wonderful cat here, it opens doors, stands up and begs, and lies down when it is told to. I spent an hour to-day speculating whether that cat was immortal. It has a mind, how can it die? I notice Mr. Thornton is very attentive to the cat, patting its back and stroking its fur.

I know just what you will say when you read this letter—that I have had one of my moods since I came, and you are half right. I was vexed to be sent to this dull place, if the sending was only in the shape of a loving wish. I was a little bit angry to find "the young man" a stupid minister, and Miss Ruth Rimer, an old maid who made butter and cheese.

When my mood passes away I will write again. Let me tell you what the orchard said to me this morning, when the sun first crept up over the hill. Every blade of grass glistened with the dew, and every clover tuft and daisy crown lifted their heads, and the June grass fairly laughed. All these beautiful things were like a hymn of faith. They declared the glory of God. Oh, Kittie, why do I ever distrust the goodness of that power, that overshadows the earth ? Surely the little clover blossom lies close to the heart of God, else how could it be so perfect. The tiny grass unfolds in his presence, else how could it bud and bloom, and toss its feathery head with such grace. All these things grow into beauty because the life within them is divine, and all divine life reaches the life of God. Then why cannot I look up from clover blossoms and daisies into my own heart, and find the same nearness to the divine?

That was the sermon, Kitty, I heard a little after sunrise. If you have read it you will believe in the dullness of this place, for I cannot translate the glory of summer, with my pulse beating time to aunt Ruth's churn.

Your loving HELEN.

Boston and Free Thought.

The papers are full of comments on the Free Church movement in Boston, and the Radical Convention, which was such a success. It is not more than twenty years since Theodore Parker stood almost alone. Now there is in Boston an army of religious radicals, that go even before Theodore Parker in contending against forms and organizations. The society of Theodore Parker still exists, though no one can call together the audiences that came to catch the inspiration of his words.

Besides this society, the Rev. Rowland Connor has seceded from the Universalists, and called together an earnest society of free thought. The Rev. W. R. Alger gathers a large congregation every Sunday, who are radical on all religious subjects.

Perhaps there is not more free thought in Boston than elsewhere, but there it is wedded to high culture, and forms an intellectual standard that always is attractive. It is a representative city, since it gathers to itself so many men and women of standing and note in the world of letters. But it only represents to the public what is active and vital everywhere, though not so distinctly seen. The Radical Convention was the outspoken voice of thousands throughout the land. There is not a Western town or city that was not represented there by many voices, if sympathy is representation.

The fact is, free thought is like the free air ; it breathes everywhere ; or, like the sunlight, truth is free to all, and all rejoice in it.

Much as we regret the hesitation of free thinkers to recognize the great truth and beauty of the Spiritual movement, yet we can feel why they do not. Their mission is to hew down the barriers that hem in the human soul. They must contend against bigotry and superstition. After them shall come those who must reveal the truth, and as surely as truth is, so surely must spirit communion be recognized.

For this reason, we rejoice at every step that radicalism takes, for it is a step forward, and though it leaves the human soul for a time, without its full measure of food, yet it is better than the dry husks it has been feeding on. Our Unitarian and Universalist brethren have missed their strong hold in excluding the facts of Spiritualism. Radicalism will lead them to it.

L. M. W.

The Intermarriage of Relations.

A pamphlet on the above subject, by Nathan Allen M. D., of Massachusetts, is worthy of attention, for it is full of valuable statistics. The laws of man's physical being, as they relate to population, it is of vital importance to understand. Marriage concerns individuals, and yet in its consequences, it concerns the public.

The instinct of the human race is opposed to the marriage of parents and children, brothers and sisters, uncles and nieces. But the union of cousins is tolerated, and is becoming quite common. From the carefully gathered facts of Dr. Allen, it is found that in such marriages there is a mysterious but certain tendency to increase the number of deaf and dumb persons. It is ascertained that 25 per cent is the result in Lyons, and 30 in Bordeaux.

The report of the well known philanthropist, Dr. S. G. Howe, gives the following facts. In seventeen families where the parents were near blood-relations, of an issue of ninety-five children, forty-four were idiots, twelve were scrofulous, four deformed, one deaf, and one dwarf.

Dr. Allen gives overwhelming statistics to show that when the intermarriage of relations is continued through several generations, the deteriorating effect upon offspring is very marked. Nowhere are these effects more visible than in the Alps, where communities are hemmed in by almost impassable barriers, and intermarriages between kindred have existed for hundreds of years. Here we find goitre, scrofula, mutism and idiocy, in aggravated forms.

The Mosaic laws have been considered a rule, and the basis of most legislation on the subject. But those laws were not as strict as of the Roman that commanded "They abstain from marrying their kinswomen in every degree of blood."

The subject claims the attention of physiologists and philanthropists, for whatever we may say of the ideal sentiment of love, we know that it should be restricted by laws that tend to protect the population of the country. As yet, very little is actually known of the laws of reproduction, but we should gather up carefully all the facts, until a science is founded.

Correspondence.

ED. PRESENT AGE.

A Philadelphia leading Daily, contains the following :

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God,
He bears them all and frees us
From the accursed load."

What an unmanly, ignoble, lazy, soul-debasing creed must that be—thought we, resting on such a shameless sentiment as this doggerel expresses. Then a spirit of commiseration possessed us, and we pitied, heartily pitied the weakness of the creed bound soul, educated so falsely as to pass through life depending solely on the good deeds, kindly acts, and merits [of another for all his individual moral value, and at last when he comes down to die, gasps or goes off singing:

"I lay my sins on Jesus ;" thus making a scape goat of one who knew no sin, if the record be true, neither was guile found in his mouth. How unjust, even were it possible, to add a single pang, or to afflict *our* wrong doing on him, whose every act was a series of the most gracious and benevolent deeds, through a life of charity and love for humanity. It is an act of gross injustice in man, can it be less in Deity,—the innocent to suffer for the guilty? "Justice," "compensation" is written every where, nor is this in conflict with the Book. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked "*for as a man soweth so shall he reap.*" Every man's punishment or reward shall be *according as his works have been.* Say to the wicked it shall be ill with him, for he shall receive the reward of his own doings, but say ye to the Righteous with him it shall be *well.*

"Vice always carries its own punishment. Virtue her reward."

Every vile act, every deed of wrong committed by man or woman makes its impress, leaves its scar on the soul. For the false teaching of modern theology to the contrary, notwithstanding man really has no scape-goat, nor even a Lamb on whose head to lay his sins, that they may be borne away, nor yet a daysman, to advocate his escape from their just penalty, but every son and daughter of the race, *must work out their own salvation,* though in truth it be God who "worketh *in* them to will and to do his own good pleasure." The possessor of this spirit will scorn to "lay his sins on Jesus," *or any other man.*

W. D. R.

SAUGATUCK, May 28th, 1869.

BROTHER FOX.—Through the columns of the PRESENT AGE, which I deem are open to the reception of Spiritual progress, I joyfully hail the opportunity as well as privilege of representing our success even in Saugatuck, which, though apparently somewhat obscure from the benefits arising from material and Spiritual associations, that belong to the earth sphere, and from which source our truest happiness arises, and our highest aspirations spring, because being sympatheticaly connected, isolation is not only unnatural, but detrimental to our being and advancement in all that goes to make up our individuality, as human beings, yet from the interior perceptions of the soul, there is ever welling up and going out through all the avenues of our being, little rivulets of happiness, giving forth aspirations that proceed from the emanations of the great Divine source. Such from our earliest reccollections, has been our experiences, while coming up through the muddy waters of opposition, founded upon ignorance and superstition; which condition it has ever been mine to be surrounded with, until my feet have been lacerated and bleeding, from treading the thorny path. But with my interior eye fastened upon the rock of our salvation, naught in Earth or Heaven could induce my steps to falter, until I had reached the desired summit, from whose height by the aid and guidance of the Angel world, I can proclaim I have drank of that pure water which satisfieth, and of that bread which perisheth not. Yes, the mind immortal must ever exist, act and move on throughout God's vast domain, however dark and obscure and to the material eye invisible. Yet, within the Divine law, nothing is lost sight of, but all concentrate to form one stupendous whole in the grand ultimate of all things.

We have of late been blessed with the presence and inspiration of the bright ones through the powers of Sister Horton, Sister Kutz and others, which were highly appreciated, and now anticipate another feast from Brother Whipple who is to speak here.

M. E. MORRISON.

SAVOY, MASS, May 15, 1869.

DORUS M. FOX—*Sir* : I have received a few copies of the PRESENT AGE in place of the *White Banner* discontinued, and am much pleased with it. It seems to be just the paper to circulate among those who would be likely to become interested in our beautiful Philosophy, as well as those who are already interested in it.

The familiar names of Dr. F. L. H. and Love M. Willis, our old friends in the columns of the *Banner of Light*, add to the charm of your paper. If I can aid in the circulation of the AGE I shall be happy to do so. I enclose payment. FLORA M. THATCHER.

From the London Spiritual Magazine.

A Spiritual Musical Seance.

Some evenings ago, namely, March 24th, 1869, my wife and I were kindly invited to join a circle, by Mr. and Mrs. Childs at their house. We found assembled there with our host and hostess, a party of twelve, including the mediums, Mr. Ed. Childs, who is our host's brother, and Mr. Austin. The visitors were Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs Fossett, Mrs. Dixon, Mr. Taylor, Mr. G. Gibbs, Mr. T. Jones, and the writer.

The circle arranged, musical instruments, namely, a violin, a flute, a piccolo flute, and an organ-concertina, were placed on the table together with a few card-board trumpets.

On the gaslight being turned off, a whispering voice was heard asking for paper. Light was reproduced, a few sheets of paper obtained, and—after being marked by some of the circle with their initials,—laid, with pencils, on the table. The light was again turned off, and a pencil was heard at work, and after a few minutes, the voice said "Light." On this being again produced, we found on one of the sheets of paper, written in pencil, in small well-formed characters of old fashioned style, the following :

Ye Account of ye Muficke of ye Evening.

Violin—"Ye lover and ye bird" M. SANCTO.
" "Cappo Intro (?)" ...... "
" "Ye Minftrel Man." ...... "
" "Fauft March" .... "
Piccolo—"Sing, birdie, fing" ......ESCOTT.
Concertina.—"Coming thro' ye rye" "
M. SANCTO.

Mrs. Anderson was anxious to possess this programme because her name was upon the paper, but Mr. Childs said he thought he ought to keep it among his records. On the light being turned off, Mrs. A——— was told that she should have something for herself ; a light was produced for a moment while she marked another sheet of paper, and on its being extinguished the pencil was heard at work again. Light was called for by the voice, and on the paper so marked was an elaborate vignette portrait in pencil, apparently done by some kind of stippling.

The circle then composed itself for the promised music, all joining hands, when the voice said, that before Sancto began with his programme he would, if agreeable, give a musical illustration of a passage in the life of an artist. We all willingly assented, when the flute gave forth an eccentric melody, lasting half a minute or so.

"That's the prelude," said the voice, "now for the illustration. Understand that the music is composed on the spot. Conceive now that our artist resolves to paint a picture ; he prepares his palette and canvas. (*Descriptive music.*) The artist thinks of a subject; he looks up as for inspiration. (*Music.*) He conceives an idea; he rushes to his easel. (*Music.* The artist drops on one knee and contemplates his work ; he thinks he has achieved success. (*Music.*) He hears a knocking at his door ; he opens ; it is his landlady ; she demands her rent. (*Music.*) The artist pleads for further time ; he points to his picture. *Music.* The landlady will wait no longer ; she puts in a distraint ; the picture is taken off." (*Music.*)

A pause following, one of the circle said, "Oh, you won't leave him so ; something ought to be done for him." "He gets better off afterwards," said the voice, "but we will tell the rest another time." "Oh, I hope so," said Mrs. Anderson, "but thanks for your music—many thanks—I was quite carried away by it !" "And so was the picture," said the voice.

Each strain of the music lasted about half-a-minute, each being distinctive, characteristic, and illustrative of the words of the verbal tableaux preceding it. While listening to it one could understand the meaning of the phrase, "discoursing music." I say "the voice ;" but I ought to say "one of the voices." The spirit, whose voice we had hitherto heard, and who had been addressed as Amos, calls himself "Amos Ferguson." The voice we next heard was that of the spirit who had written the programme, and who calls himself "Antonius Sancto ;" this voice is different in pitch, intonation, accent, and articulation, and is thus quite distinguishable from the other, although both are whispering.

Sancto asked Mr. Childs to tune and lay the violin on the table. This was done. The spirit corrected the tuning, and then ran over the instrument, bringing out that tone proper to it when the mute is on. Some were so sure that the mute must be on, that Mr. Childs struck a light and searched the violin case, but found it there. The light being put out, the violin was played again with the mute sound, then without it, and so several tunes alternately ; the invisible player evidently amusing us, and being amused himself at our mystification. Then he imitated the sounds of a repeater, striking the hours and minutes. This, I was told, he had done at a previous *seance*, imitating on the violin, the sounds of the repeater of one of the circle who wanted to know how the time was going ; then he imitated "Big Ben ;" then the sounds of the various animals of a farm-yard.

Along with these latter sounds we heard another voice joining the two others in remarks and repartee, very diverting to those to whom they were addressed and who understood them. The laughter was frequently checked by the voice of Amos, calling for quiet and passivity, and saying that noise and excitement disturbed the influence.

The third voice was sonorous and shrill ; it belongs to a spirit who speaks, in rustic dialect, a droll sentence or two at a time, but the purpose of his coming seems obscure if it be not to assist the others in physical manipulations. This and the other spirits have given little bits of their history while in the body.

As the last mentioned spirit made himself heard, we heard also from time to time the note of a bird, perhaps produced by this or some other spirit ; there must have been several. Sancto tells Mr. Childs that a spirit, named Escott, takes part with him in these musical manifestations.

Sancto's voice now called for quiet and passivity, and he began his concert with the piece first in order on his programme, being accompanied now and then by a tapping of a card-board tube. Silence was also called by the same signal.

The air "Sing, birdie, sing," was beautifully played on the flute, the accompaniment being really as by a singing bird. But how can I speak of the March from *Faust*, and the March from *Le Prophete*, which was asked for by one of the circle, on the organ-concertina, in the hands of this spirit ? The performance of each of these pieces could not have been surpassed by a perfectly conducted band, in force, accuracy, finish and feeling. The audience were unanimous in requesting the invisible friends to repeat them, and the request was immediately complied with, with perhaps a higher appreciation on our parts of the music, and a more complete forgetfulness of the imperfect instrument by which it was rendered.

After an hour-and-half's playing, the programme was concluded, each piece being played at our request more than once, and then the invisible performers, seeming to like the enthusiasm of their auditory, invited the members of the circle to name in succession an air and they would try to play it. This was done ; one asked for this favorite air, another for that, each being perfectly given upon one or the other of the instruments. While the flute played we could hear the thrumming of accompanying chords from the violin. One asked for a repetition of "Sing, birdie, sing," and it was given as before with the bird accompaniment. While it was being debated whether the accompaniment was produced by some fine management of the piccolo, Sancto's voice said, "I think you would like the air on the piccolo ; shall I play it on the piccolo ?" "O, thank you, yes." The air was played on it most perfectly, the music being heard free, as it were, from the vibration of the instrument, and accompanied again by the singing of the bird more clearly and effectively than before, now sounding far, then near, then far again.

One lady asked for a tune, of which she said she was composer ; the words beginning "I remember, I remember, as my childhood fleeted by." "Favor us, madam, with the first bar," said the voice. The lady sang the first verse ; at the end of the first bar, the flute accompanied her voice note for note as delicately as if singer and invisible performer were playing from the same music with the same perception and feeling. As if pleased with pleasing, the performer, or performers, accompanied the lady through the whole song, and then played the air successively upon each instrument on the table, just as the lady (did she know the instruments), so she told me, would have played it herself.

As the time for breaking up approached, Mr. Childs asked Sancto to favor us with the usual concert finale. The concertina gave forth "Rule Britannia," the last note of which was prolonged into the first of "God save the Queen," rendered with wonderful power and finish.

This brought to a close a *seance* more interesting than any that I have been present at for the last fifteen years, as affording proof of the ability of spirits manifesting themselves by action. But the circle was held under conditions favorable to the manifestation of such action ;—for, first, all present had learned to know that we are in a spiritual sphere of existence ; secondly, the mediums were good ; thirdly, the *seance* was held under conditions suggested by the spirits themselves ; and fourthly, all present were in kindly harmony with each other.

Thus it was that we were favored at once with an extraordinary spiritual manifestation, and an equally extraordinary musical entertainment.

J. DIXON.

8, Great Ormond St., London, W. C.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

The Second National Convention of the Children's Progressive Lyceum.

Pursuant to adjournment, of the First National Convention of the Friends of the Children's Progressive Lyceum, the Second Annual Meeting will be held Kremlin Hall, in the City of Buffalo, State of New York, "immediately after the adjournment of the sixth National Convention of Spiritualists," on Thursday the second day of September 1869, at ten o'clock in the morning, and to continue in session from day to day until the business of the Convention shall be accomplished.

We, therefore, invite each Progressive Lyceum on the Continent to send two delegates, and an additional one for every fifty, or fractional fifty over the first fifty members, and each State organization to send as many delegates as they may have Representatives in Congress, and each local organization where there are no Lyceums, is invited to send two delegates to attend and participate in this most important and practical work of the age.

MARY F. DAVIS, President,
Orange N. J., on behalf of the Board.

HENRY T. CHILD, M. D.
634 Race St. Philadelphia, Secretary.

Dorus M. Fox, Michigan; Michael B. Dyott, Pennsylvania ; George Haskell, M. D. Illinois ; Mary Z. Sanborn, Massachusetts ; Nettie M. Pease, Maryland ; Clementini Averill, New York ; C. M. Putnam, Wisconsin ; Hannah F. M. Brown, Illinois ; Cornelius B. Campbell, New Jersey ; Cora L. V. Daniels, Louisiana ; George B. Davis, District of Columbia ; Portia Gage, New Jersey ; John H. Currier, Massachusetts ; Eli F. Brown Ind.

Fourth Annual Convention of the Illinois State Association of Spiritualists.

By order of the Executive Committee of the Association, the Fourth Annual Convention of the Illinois State Association of Spiritualists will be held at Havana, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 25th, 26th and 27th, 1869.

Each local society of Spiritualists, or other reformers, shall be entitled to a representative in the State Convention in the following ratio, viz., Each society shall be entitled to two delegates, and an additional delegate for each fraction of fifty over the first fifty members.

Weather permitting, several sessions will be held in a pleasant grove. The Spiritualists of Havana extend a cordial invitation to their brethren and sisters of the State to meet with them and enjoy the meeting.

Arrangements have been made with the Peoria, Pekin and Jacksonville R. R. for reduced fare.

W. F. JAMIESON. Sec'y.

State Temperance Convention at Kalamazoo--June 22nd, 1869.

A strong desire having been expressed of late, by some active temperance men, particularly in the central and western portions of the State, for another Convention to be held soon ; the friends of the Temperance Party of Michigan are hereby requested to assemble in mass Convention at Kalamazoo, on Tuesday, the 22nd of June inst., at 2 o'clock P. M. of that day.

There are many valid reasons for issuing this call ; but the *near approach* of a NATIONAL CONVENTION, for the purpose of giving wider scope to the movement, would alone justify the holding of a previous meeting in our State. "For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war : and in multitude of counselors there is safety." Temperance men of Michigan ; let us have a full meeting.

Called in behalf of the State Central Committee.

J. RUSSELL, Chairman.

The Religo Philosophical Society (Spiritualists) of Rockford, Kent County, will hold their regular Quarterly Meeting in the grove (where it was last year) if the weather is suitable, if not, in Parker's Hall, Saturday and Sunday July 3rd, and 4th.

The Kent County Circle will meet at the same time and Place.

All are invited. Good speakers will be in attendance.

NATHAN TABER, Pres.

June 9th, 1869.

Yearly Meeting.

The yearly meeting of the First Society of Spiritualists of Farmington, will be held in the grove, near that place, commencing Saturday 10 o'clock A. M., June 26th, 1868, and continuing over Sunday.

Also the third quarterly meeting of the Oakland County Circle will be held at the same time and place. Good speakers will be in attendance, among whom are Mrs. L. A. Pearsall. Invitation is extended to all.

NORTON LAPHAM, *Pres't.*

The Van Buren County Circle will hold its next Quarterly Meeting at Lawrence, commencing Saturday, July 3rd, at 2 o'clock, P. M., holding over Sunday. Rev. A. J. Fishback and Mrs. Frank Reed are the Speakers engaged for the occasion. All are earnestly invited to attend. J. H. TUTTLE, President.
ROBERT BAKER, Secretary.

WESTERN DEPARTM'T.

J. S. LOVELAND, F. L. WADSWORTH. } - Editors.

All communications for this Department should be addressed to J. S. LOVELAND, Monmouth, Ill., or F. L. WADSWORTH, 183 Superior St., Chicago.

Signs of the Times.

All men are not prophets, but he would be a bold man who would affirm that no one ever possessed the power to read the seemingly unrolled page of the coming future. To deny that "coming events cast their shadows before," would be flying in the face of experience, as well as ignoring the plainest pages of history. Among living Seers, none stand in position of greater importance than A. J. Davis. The recent discoveries, verifying statements made, some twenty and more years since, by him, render those still unfulfilled more intensely interesting. The question stands thus: if the discovery of certain facts respecting the atmosphere of the sun, verifies the Seership of Mr. Davis in the direction of science, are there any signs in the social heavens indicating the completion of his prophecies of societary change? What answer shall we give? Before giving any, let us say, 1st, that many others have made the same predictions, but Mr. D. takes priority in time, of them all; and 2nd, what the prophecies really are. Without quoting at length, we give the purport as follows: The religious elements will be ranged in two great bodies, Conservative and Progressive. The Progressive, embracing men from all present organizations, will be ranged under the banner of Harmonial Philosophy, or the freedom and supremacy of reason. The Conservative will all be included in the broad pale of the Roman Catholic Church; and between the two a terrible conflict will be waged, ending finally in the triumph of Reason and right. Mr. Davis has not presumed to fix the precise time when these events will transpire, nor the exact steps by which they will be accomplished. Are there any definite signs indicating the approaching conflict? We think there are, and as a faithful sentinel, call the attention of the readers of the AGE to some of the most important.

1st, In no period of history, has the Church more earnestly sought for power than the present. The issue is clearly made. Rationalism or the Church must go down. It is a last conflict, to be fought on new ground, and with new weapons. True to its ancient instincts, the Church looks to the sword as the last appeal, and intends to be found sword in hand, with its foes unarmed.

2nd, This contest is to be no child's play. The army of 50 to 100,000 priests in this country, controlling the educational system of the same, leagued with the prominent politicans, and backed by some six to eight million men and women, possessing a large share of the nation's wealth, is no mean foe, and will make no meager fight. Their all is at stake. Their lordship over human reason, their titles of superiority, and their fat salaries, are all perilled in the contest. The person who dreams of an easy victory over such a power, has utterly misread history, and totally misconceived all the principles of human nature. One source of deception on the part of liberalists, we feel bound to notice. It is claimed that neither ministers nor members have any very strong faith in the old dogmas of their creeds and confessions. This is true, but it is one of the most fearful elements of power possessed by the church, instead of weakness, as many mistakenly suppose. So long as sects are honest in their professions, they cannot unite, and their mutual opposition serves largely to neutralize their several efforts. But as they become lax in faith, hypocrisy predominates, and policy, not principle, is the rule of action. Union is possible then, and power is in proportion to union. Again laxity of doctrine is accompanied with a Jesuitic spirit of accomodation to the ambition of politicians, and the ostentation of the wealthy, which unites them all in one. Any one familiar with church history will verify our position. No one can fail to see, that the protestant sects have become more united just in proportion as they have grown lax in their creedal faiths. To a like extent, have they become identified with a single political party. Their pretence of liberality, is the siren song intended to lull the votaries of reason into a fatal sleep.

3rd. Mark well the means now proposed for the triumph of the church!

The union of all cognate sects under one jurisdiction. The O. S. and N. S. Presbyterians have substantially completed theirs; and the United and Reformed seem to be making progress in the same direction. No doubt a few years will see all Presbyterians in one body. The Methodists will follow suit, and if lay delegation carries in the Episcopal, or largest body, all differences will be removed, and the Reformed, Wesleyan, United Brethren, and others can coalesce in one mammoth body of some two million people. Nor do we see why the Baptists should long linger in a divided state. When these unions are completed, then the proposition will be made for a coalition, or alliance of all these bodies, on what will be termed an Evangelical Platform. It is already mooted. This will be a union so far as to prevent all that friction and opposition to each other, which has so largely crippled them in the past. They will husband their power. These measures, we are certain will carry. Fifty years ago they would not have been listened to a moment. But then, people were not urged to join the church because it was respectable. To-day, they are. Jesuitism is in the ascendent.

But another important measure is proposed, and is being secretly carried out. The primary caucuses of the people are being manipulated, so as to prevent the election of all men to civil office, who will not sustain the Sunday Laws, and other pet schemes of the sects. We heard the details of such operations stated in a Union Christian Convention, and its success in the election of members to the present Illinois Legislature gloried in. If liberal minded men find themselves laid on the shelf, in nominating conventions, they can understand the reason. If we sleep on, we shall merit defeat.

(4.) The proposed amendment to the national constitution, is part of this same scheme, and it is by no means so certain, as many think, that this villainy will not be consummated. If the people were to decide it, we should not fear, but it is in the hands of dishonest politicians, many of whom are the members, and paid tools of the churches. There is too much corruption to warrant us in expecting either truth or justice.

(5.) Another measure, inaugurated by some of the sects, is the extinction of all organizations but the church. Masons, Odd Fellows, Good Templars, and similar bodies are proclaimed to be inimical to the interests of the church. They are irreligious and dangerous. This is a true position from a church stand point. Every Lodge of these bodies, every society of whatever name, proposing the moral good of man, is a proclamation of the inefficiency of the church. It assumes to do what the church declares cannot be done except through its own special agencies. Of necessity it must oppose them, or prove recreant to its own high pretensions. Secret Associations, and moral societies are so many organized denials of the special claim of the church to be the only reformatory power in the Universe. The most unrelenting war is to be waged against them. We said at the outset, that the lust of power never showed itself more plainly than at present. The hungry priests see that Masonry and Odd Fellowship are powerful. They rear costly and beautiful edifices—they have a bond of brotherhood mightier than that shown by the church—they dispense vast sums of money in charity, and in the case of Masons, the left hand is not allowed to know what the right hand doeth. It is not blazoned abroad like the pious charities of the church, and no fat salaries are paid to some useless priest to dole them out. This maddens the priests. Here, is money and power, independent of their control. Here is a religious and moral association, not subscribing to their creeds, nor heeding their influence. These institutions must be suppressed. They rival and put to shame the church in real benevolence. They are far in advance of the church in real growth. Therefore, they must be suppressed.

One thing more is necessary to complete the programme, and prepare for unsheathing the sword of persecution, the Union of Romanism and Protestanism. That will come last, and it would not do to formally announce it at present.

The Union has been proposed in Germany, but will be most likely rejected for the present. It, however, will open the question, and pave the way for its future accomplishment. It is policy, in this country, for the two to *seem* to be at great variance; while, at the same time, the Protestants are rushing with fearful speed direct to Popery; most of them ignorantly, while their Jesuit leaders smile in private over their simplicity. What are we doing to counteract the tireless workers in the service of falsehood? Comparatively nothing. Let the readers of the AGE form an exception to this dangerous apathy. The heavens are black with angry signs. The clear toned voice of prophecy comes to us from the unseen world, and tells us the meaning of these angry tokens which, in turn, interpret the prophecies. Are we Spiritualists? Do we believe in the primary principles of our religion? Do we propose to stand still, while Church-hate whets the knife for our throat in our very sight, and fiercely announces its intended use? Will we let the blood bought charter of our partial liberty be altered, and then wielded by priestly bigotry? We shall see. L.

Sunday Reading Rooms.

On Thursday eve, 10th inst. The Chicago Library Association held a special meeting, called by its President, Rev. Robert Collyer, for the purpose of voting on the question of opening their Reading Room on Sunday. After discussion, the following resolution; to wit:

Resolved, "That the by-laws of this Association be so amended as to allow the Executive Committee to open the reading-room on Sundays, at such time as they may see fit," was passed with few dissenting voices.

It was decided to open the room from 9 A. M. to 10 P. M.

Thus, at the hands of Mr. Collyer, so much has been accomplished in overcoming the prejudices of people against Sunday reading-rooms; and we hope the example may be followed by all other societies having charge of avenues to knowledge and mental improvement; to the end that at no distant day Chicago may be proud of one of the finest public Sunday reading-rooms in the country. What a grand movement it would be if Spiritualists would take hold of this subject of so much public importance and in a half dozen or more of our larger cities establish such libraries and reading-rooms and open them to the public. Why don't they? They are all professedly in favor of this sort of thing. Are they too poor? They can count their hoarded millions. Are they too few? Behold! eleven millions!(?) Is there an insufficiency of public spirit among them? Really no people should have the cause of education so much at heart as they; and while the much talked of College movement may be a fair demominational effort, a public reading-room movement, free to all on Sundays, would come much nearer the *live* demands of the times and enlist the public spirit more generally, we think. W.

Historical Excerpta.

WHO BURNED THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY?

From our boyhood, we have read from what purport to be histories, that the Mohammedans destroyed the famous library of the Ptolemies, numbering some 700,000 volumes. The tale is told with many dramatic amplifications. It is said that the Arab general sent word to the Caliph to know what disposition should be made of the library, on the capture of the city. The answer was, that, if the books contained anything contrary to the Koran they ought to be burnt, and if they contained nothing but what agreed with the Koran they were useless, therefore, let them be burnt. The books were consequently scattered, and for many months fed the fires of the city baths. This is the christian account, and intended to cast obloquy on the followers of Mahommet. Without presuming to set this entire account down as a falsehood, we offer the following reasons for doubting its correctness.

1. The conceded fact, "lying and deception" were considered virtues in the christian church, where its interests could be thereby promoted.

2. Christians of to-day rejoice that it was destroyed.

3. The burning of books for the safety of the church, was for centuries a common practice. Manuscripts of the bible have been, by christians, burned by the thousand.

4. Within twenty-five years from the death of Mahommet, the patronage of learning was the settled policy of the Arab sovereigns. They founded schools, academies, collected libraries, copied manuscripts, and in all ways sought to promote the cultivation of learning. One decree was, that no mosque should be erected without a school was attached to it.

5. The uncontradicted facts in the case. This great collection of books was begun by Ptolemy Soter, not far from 300 B. C., though to his successor, Philadelphus, the credit of founding the library is most commonly ascribed. This was located in that quarter of the city termed the Bruchion, and was connected with the Museum. It numbered 400,000 volumes. The second great library was established by Ptolemy Physcon at the Serapion, in the adjoining quarter of the city. The library of the Bruchion was burned during the seige of the city by Julius Cæser. Mark Antony presented to Cleopatra the library of Peagamus, numbering 200,000 volumes, as a partial atonement for the one destroyed. This was added to the one in the Serapion, which thus became the greatest library in the world. It was in the latter part of the fourth century, about 390 A. D., in the reign of Theodosius the great, who was a Spaniard by birth, that the famous temple of Seraphis was destroyed. One Theophilus, who had formerly been a monk of Nitria, was the Archbishop of Alexandria. With his fanatical followers, he bore undying hate toward the temple and library of Seraphis, and only waited for a pretext to destroy it. Says Draper; "To them it was a reproach and an insult. Its many buildings were devoted to unknown, and therefore unholy uses. In its vaults and silent chambers the populace believed that the most abominable mysteries were carried on. There were magical brazen circles and sun-dials for fortune telling in its porch; every one said that they had once belonged to Pharaoh, or the conjurers who strove with Moses. Alas! no one of the ferocious bigots knew that with these, Eratosthenes had in the old times measured the size of the earth, and Timocharis had determined the motions of the planet Venus." The desired opportunity at length arrived. The christians provoked a quarrel with the pagans, who sheltered themselves in the temple. The Emperor was appealed to, who ordered it destroyed, and entrusted the work to Theophilus and his Monks. Before their infuriate zeal the magnificent temple, with its works of art, went down in ruin, and a church was erected on its site. With the characteristic hate of knowledge, which has distinguished the christian religion, Theophilus, and his black cowled Monks pillaged and dispersed the library first. Twenty years subsequently the empty shelves or cases were standing.

Now, when the christian world is prepared to show, when, and by whom these scattered volumes were gathered, (if not all destroyed at this period,) who had charge of them—in what part of Alexandria they were kept etc, we will modify our scepticism somewhat respecting the reputed destruction by the Arabs, to whom we owe the revival of learning, and many, very many— of the most important elements of our present civilization.

The Irish Church Bill.

The British House of commons has passed the bill disestablishing the Irish Church. (The special provisions of their bill we set forth some time since in the PRESENT AGE.) The Protestant Episcopal Church is no longer the Established Church of Ireland. The bill, as passed, has been opposed by all the means at the disposal of a wealthy, powerful and desperate aristocracy. It has passed, in the face of threats of Irish Protestant revolt and Fenian excesses. It is reported as a remarkable fact, that one of the strongest arguments made use of to show why the Church should be continued as the *established church*, was, that with the exception of half a dozen parishes, there were not church members enough in any locality to support a rector and a curate, much less a Bishop and the intermediate dignitaries. It was, in fact, a church without a people. Partly, perhaps, as a cover to this objection, the bill provides for the support, during their lives, of the present official incumbents; but the Established Church itself is abolished and extinguished beyond the hope of recovery.

The bill now goes to the House of Lords, where it will undoubtedly be acted upon without delay; not because this body of concentrated aristocracy, of itself, is in favor of disestablishment, but because a contest between the Lords and Commons on this bill would precipitate England into an excitement unequalled in her history for half a century; and out of that excitement would spring a revolution, headed by a new liberal party, which would not stop short of Land Reform, Manhood Suffrage, or *universal* suffrage, and kindred awaiting reforms. This the Lords foresee, with its consequent jeopardy to themselves and their institutions; therefore, they will doubtless accept the lesser inevitable step in reform, and not hasten, by a struggle which would certainly be unsuccessful, the other and vastly more searching changes in the religious, social and political condition of their country.

So disintegration goes on. The old pets of aristocracy and the bulwarks of despotism are gradually passing away, and in the light reflected by such events as the disestablishment of the Irish Church, we see the certain inauguration and success of all measures necessary to a free, rational, republican government, where now subjects groan under the burdens laid upon them by their political, social and religious masters. W.

An Appeal.

Readers of the AGE! We have a few serious words to you, coupled with a serious request. And the gravity of the same, is very much enhanced by the fact that our request involves the ever recurring question of funds. In a word, we want more readers for the AGE, and more who pay therefor. We have good evidence that the paper is well liked. We haven't yet got fairly settled down in our Department, but we intend, and shall work with a will, to make it the best in any of the Spiritualist papers published. And whether we actually succeed, or not, the *effort* will enhance the value of our columns. The publication of this paper, is a declaration of its publishers, that those already in existence did not meet *all* the wants of the Spiritualistic public. It does not pretend that they meet none, and will seek to detract *nothing* from their well earned standing. But it does claim to fill an especial sphere of its own, and it purposes, in the future, to realize more fully its ideal. The creation of its several Editorial Departments is in pursuance of that design. And its proposed enlargement in the future, will most essentially forward that desired end. But to enlarge the paper, and not materially, or at all enhance the price, demands a wider circulation. To gain that, requires the earnest, volunteer work of all our readers. We want our list doubled during the next six weeks. It can be done, and easily, if even half our readers will make a decided move at once. We do not regret that several papers started at about the same time, for it will try our capacity, and make a better paper in the end, of the one, or more, which shall keep the field. Try us, friends. If you take another paper, combine by two, or three, and give us a trial, and if we don't make ourselves necessary to you, cast us one side. Reader, let us move all together, and place the AGE above all possible pecuniary embarrassment, and see what the paper can be made. Get one subscriber each, and the work is done. L.

Down on Secret Societies.

Perhaps one of the most silly, weak minded affairs on record, is the sayings and doings of a Convention of anxious theological bigots lately held in Chicago—The National Christian Association. They are down on all sorts of secret societies whatever, and continually expose their weakness and lack of reason by appointing committees to manufacture special prayers in behalf of those who are bold enough to openly oppose Masonry &c. It is reported that heart rending accounts were given of a large number of murders, by Masons, of those who had exposed the secrets of that Order! The Rev. Moses Thatcher gallantly offered himself as an additional martyr in the cause of "no secrecy."

It is the purpose of this Christian Association to remove all men from responsible positions, as editors of religious papers, officers of tract societies &c., who belong to any secret society; and they declare their determination not to support any man for office politically who has any allegiance with that sort of thing.

All of this bluster arises from the supposed fact that secret societies are "unscriptural," "opposed to the cause of Christ," and "hostile to the peace and welfare of the Church of Christ;" and further, "that secret societies set up a religion, and religious standards of their own." Well, that is reason enough why bigots should oppose them. He who won't bow his neck and take the yoke, must expect opposition from the truly orthodox (?)

But what will this opposition amount to? There are undoubtedly many more members of secret societies in this country, than there are christians; and only a handful of the christians can be urged into this unequal war. Secret societies will feel the blow dealt against them by these people, with sensations of pain equal to those which would be felt by an elephant run over by "three blind mice." W.

Editorial Notes and Clippings.

The House of Lords has made some pretensions to opposition to the bill disestablishing the Irish Church; but the latest information concerning their attitude, is to the effect that they will consider "discretion the better part of valor" and pass it as it came to them from the House of Commons.

PARIS, France, is disturbed. The late election showed a large majority opposed to the Government Candidates, and the tide of revolution rising rapidly, threatens the peace of the nation. The populace have for several days been kept in subjection only by armed force.

Mrs. Colby has lectured at Crosby's Music Hall, Chicago, during the last two Sundays. Miss Susie M. Johnson is advertised to speak in the same place, for the remaining Sundays of the month.

The King of Sweden in closing the session of the Diet, promised to give his serious attention to the question of a more extended religious freedom.

The number of Protestant Christian converts in China amounts now to about five thousand. At this rate each convert must have cost an immense sum of money—many thousands of dollars; and for what? Simply to substitute one form of theological belief for another, without improving the ethics of the people one whit. The same amount of money expended in *good works*, which the Christian scoffs at as a means of salvation, would have saved ten times five thousand from much sin and more suffering.

The Spirits in San Francisco.

The following, by the San Francisco correspondent of the Chicago *Tribune*, shows the "Golden State" is not without its spirits, but that it has a full stock on hand, and lively ones at that:

DR. SCUDDER NONPLUSSED.

The male and female media, who make a business or pleasure of holding consultations with disembodied spirits, for those who are not similarly gifted, but whose curiosity leads them to seek a glimpse behind the veil, have some curious experiences occasionally, and meet now and then very eccentric clients. There is a medium of the gentler sex who does business, we believe, on Howard street. To her there came, inspired by the universal curiosity, a reverend divine, Dr. Scudder, of this city, skilled in theology, and at home in the Asiatic languages. It was his firm determination to expose this humbug, and destroy, as Paul did of old at Ephesus, the profits and emoluments of those who minister to "strange gods." The simple preparations were made. The little plain, lacquered table was placed in position, and the customary scraps of paper placed before the visitor, on which to write his questions. The medium did not seem much discomposed by the sanctified appearance of the gentleman, nor did her nerves tremble when she became aware that he was testing her "familiars" in what was to her an unknown language. She had confidence in her "spirits." The questions were put in Hindoostan, Sanscrit, Arabic, Persian, and all sorts of strange languages. The reverend scholar was airing his learning admirably, and, as he thought, to the complete discomfiture of the poor little medium. But he was mistaken; for back from the spirit world, or somewhere else, came, in the same language in which the questions were put, full and most satisfactory answers. The questioner stared. He was sorely puzzled, while the medium sat calm and unmoved, with a stray sunbeam from the partially curtained window glinting in her rich blonde tresses.

The divine tried her powers again and again, until his mind was in a state of sad bewilderment; and he was fain to acknowledge, to himself, that he had signally failed in his attempted exposure. He arose to leave. But he could not retreat without a parting word.

"Madam," said he, turning to the medium, who had risen with him, and was standing demurely by his side; "Madam, your art is from the devil; abandon it for the sake of humanity, and for your own peace of mind."

Then there came a new light into the eyes of the hitherto quiet medium—the light that shines when the temper is aroused.

"Doctor," said she, in calm, but decided tones, "you, I presume, are a minister of some church in this city, and you make a living by the practice of your profession. I simply do the same thing by the exercise of my peculiar gift. It may be right, or it may be wrong. I do not presume to argue that point. Let it rest. But I may say this: if, as you assert, the gift is from the Father of Evil, does it not follow, from the promptness and correctness with which your answers came, that your friends must have a very near relation to that much abused individual?"

This was too much for the doctor. He was beaten at all points. With a muttered "Good day," he passed out into the street, and the medium saw him no more.

Are we wrong in supposing that the little golden-haired lady had a quiet laugh to herself, after this remarkable interview was over!

RAILROADS.

THE MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD.

Run by Chicago time, 15 minutes slower than Detroit time.

TRAINS WESTWARD.

STATIONS.	Mail	*Exp.	†Accom	*† Exp.	§ Exp
	A M	A M	P M	P M	P M
Detroit. dep	6.35	9.00	4.20	6.00	9.30
Ypsilanti	8.05	10.13	5.50	7.20	10.40
Ann Arbor	8.35	10.35	6.15	7.50	11.00
Jackson	10.20	11.50		9.35	AM12.20
Marshall	12.00	PM 1.20		11.00	1.40
BattleCre'k	PM12.40	3.47		11.33	2.10
Kalamazoo	1.43	2.35	AM 4.25	AM12.32	3.05
Niles	3.43	4.20	6.35	2.40	5.10
Mich City	5.15	5.45	8.20	4.05	6.40
Chicago. Ar.	7.40	8.00	11.00	6.30	9.00

TRAINS EASTWARD.

STATIONS.	Mail	Exp	Accom	Exp	Exp
	A M	A M	P M	P M	P M
Chicago.	5:	8:	3:55	5:15	9:
Mich C'ty	7:25	10:10	6:20	7:22	11:15
Niles	9:05	11:25	7:55	8:53	A M12:45
Kalamazoo	11:05	P.M. 1: 3	9:50	10:43	2:25
Battle Cr'k	P M 12:08	1:47		11:33	3:10
Marshall	1:	2:35		AM.12:05	3:43
Jackson	2:25	3:45		1:10	5:05
Ann Arbor	4:20	5:	A M 7:05	2:20	6:30
Ypsilanti	4:45	5:20	7:30	2:40	5:50
Detroit.	6:05	6:30	8:55	3:45	8:00

Kalamazoo, Allegan & Grand Rapids R.R.

GOING NORTH

Leave Kalamazoo at	7.15 A. M.	3.00 P. M.
" Allegan at	8.35	4.30
Arrive at Grand Rapids	10.35 A. M.	6.35 P. M.

TRAINS SOUTH.

Leave Grand Rapids at	9.45 A. M.	3.45 M. P.
" Allegan at	11.35	6.45
Arrive at Kalamazoo at	12.45 P. M.	9.00 P. M.

ST. JOE VALLEY RAILROAD.

GOING SOUTH.

LEAVE KALAMAZOO at	8.00 A. M.	3.45 P. M.
" Schoolcraft at	8.40	5.05
" Three Rivers at	9.20	6.05
Arrive at White Pigeon at	10.05 A. M.	7.05 P. M.

GOING NORTH.

LEAVE WHITE PIGEON at	7.45 A. M.	3.40 P. M.
" Three Rivers at	9.20	4.20
" Schoolcraft at	10.20	5.05
Arrive at Kalamazoo at	11.30 A. M.	5.45 P. M.

THE PRESENT AGE:
A Weekly Journal,
DEVOTED TO THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY, POLITE LITERATURE AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.
PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY MORNING
AT
KALAMAZOO, MICH.,
BY
The Michigan Spiritual Publication Co.
DORUS M. FOX, - - - PRESIDENT.
DR. WM. WEYBURN, - - - SECRETARY.
JEREMIAH BROWN, - - - TREASURER.
The Resident Editors will be assisted by a large corps of the ablest writers in the East and in the West.
Terms of Subscription, $2 a Year,
SIX MONTHS $1 THREE MONTHS, 50 Cents.
INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.
SPECIMEN COPIES SENT FREE
All communications should be addressed to COL. D. M. FOX, Kalamazoo, Mich.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.

SPACE.	1 wk	2 wks	1 mo	2 mo	6 mo	1 year
1 Sq.	$1 00	$1 50	$2 50	$5 00	$8 00	$15 00
2 "	1 50	2 00	3 00	8 00	15 00	25 00
3 "	2 00	3 00	5 00	12 00	20 00	40 00
¼ col.	5 00	7 00	10 00	25 00	45 00	80 00
½ "	8 00	10 00	15 00	40 00	75 00	150 00
1 "	15 00	20 00	30 00	75 00	150 00	250 00

Ten lines this size type constitute one square.
Business Cards, twelve dollars per year.
Legal advertisements, Legal rates.
Notices of death inserted free.
Obituary notices fifteen cents per line.
Marriage notices one dollar each.